AUGUST 1965

Commentary

VOLUME FORTY, NUMBER TWO

CAN CULTURE EXPLODE?
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STANLEY KAUFFMANN

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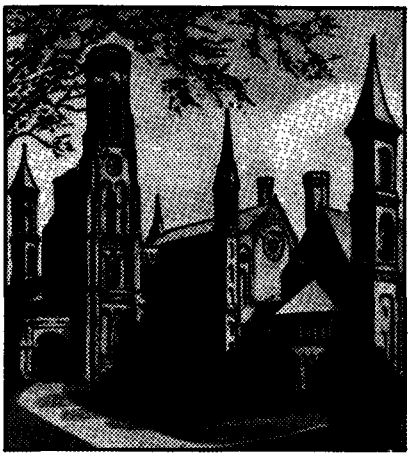

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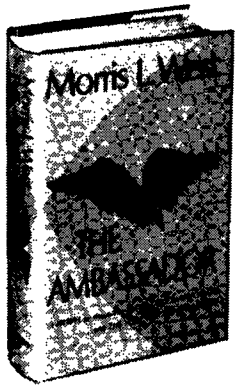

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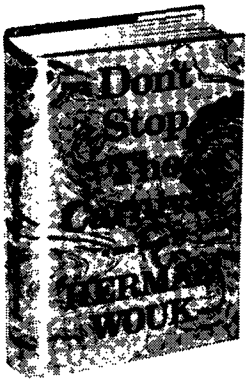

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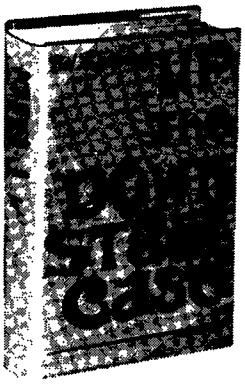

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LETTERS FROM READERS

Teilhard's Thought

To the Editor of Commentary:

Stephen Toulmin's article, "On Teilhard de Chardin" [March] makes some errors concerning Teilhard's theology by accepting uncritically the judgments of Father Rabut as representative of "traditional Catholicism." There are two problems here as far as Catholic theology is concerned: first, to distinguish authentic Catholic tradition from a traditional or common approach of theologians over a certain period of history, for these two are not always the same; second, to distinguish among Catholic theologians those who are the most accurate interpreters of Teilhard. There are many modern Catholic theologians who by no means regard Teilhard as an "enthusiastic amateur" in theology, as Mr. Toulmin describes him. The label "amateur" is often applied to Teilhard by theologians who adhere to a certain type of rigid scholastic approach in theology and philosophy but not by those who are contributing to the biblical and theological renewal in the Church. One should consult, in contrast to Rabut, Henri de Lubac's *La pensée religieuse du Père Teilhard de Chardin* (Aubier, 1962). There, de Lubac shows quite conclusively that Teilhard by no means confused the natural and supernatural. He carefully avoided two extremes: naturalism and independence or discord between the natural and supernatural. He believed that the natural elements of the world are transformed by the supernatural so as to be rendered both "more" and "other." The natural is necessary in the sense of furnishing appropriate matter for salvific action but it is only a condition, and the relationship is one of coherent subordination. Condition is not determining cause, and coherent subordination is not assimilation. In the thinking of Teilhard, it is the grace of God which saves, and not evolutionary forces.

I am less sure of myself in commenting on Mr. Toulmin's rejection of orthogenesis on the grounds that it is generally discredited by scientists. The point does seem to be, as he suggests, whether Teilhard's assumption that, phenomenologically, one can see man as the center of the evolutionary process is correct, or whether the scientific view limits man to being one strand in the process—or at least precludes a definite stand on the question. Mr. Toulmin does not quite admit that Teilhard's position is tenable scientifically and states that it has, in fact, been arrived at first on religious grounds; he would insist that "we are not compelled to follow him [Teilhard] in this belief, unless the scientific evidence is open to this one religious interpretation alone." I would agree that Teilhard was influenced in the direction of orthogenesis with man at the center by religion, but not that it (that is, the theory of *The Phenomenon of Man* up to the epilogue) is untenable scientifically, given the fact of evolution.

Finally, several theories on man's role probably will remain open as far as scientific evidence is concerned and one would not be compelled to the scientific position which Teilhard has arrived at by the implicit integration of religion and science. Teilhard realized this dilemma of uncertainty on the scientific level and refused to be compelled to *no solution* at that level. According to de Lubac, as much as Teilhard respected the distinction of disciplines, guarding against the mixtures of levels and sources of knowledge or against the illegitimate contamination of the phenomenal plane by the metaphysical, so he also refused to resign himself to leaving them in an isolation destructive of the unity of man. That is why he wrote the epilogue to the *Phenomenon*. He did not want to find the Christian élan in a natural prolongation of the earthly, but to synthesize the earthly with the Christian.

Sister Teresa Mary DeFerrari, C.S.C.
Assistant Professor of Theology
Dunbarton College of Holy Cross
Washington, D.C.

To the Editor of Commentary:

. . . As a Roman Catholic (and a statistician) . . . I would like to comment first on the quote from Father Rabut: "There is a kind of statistical law of accumulation of effects; this leads, certainly, to a general trend in living forms, but

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no force, physical or psychical, to be compared with . . . gravity. . . ."

It is sometimes difficult to distinguish between a "general trend" and a force. There are some statistical fluctuations which display such regularity as to reveal a definite underlying force of nature. I should want to leave open the possibility of such a force extending throughout evolution as a whole.

Secondly, Teilhard's ideas seem to be quite reminiscent of those of Lecomte du Noüy as expressed in *Human Destiny,* so that they are not as completely unprecedented in Catholic circles as Mr. Toulmin says they are.

The article made very interesting reading, and spurs one on to study the "phenomenon" of Teilhard more thoroughly.

(Dr.) MICHAEL F. CAPOBIANCO
Brooklyn, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Stephen Toulmin's prime objection to Teilhard's views appears to be that they are based on wish-fulfillment rather than "science." But is our most advanced modern knowledge (also called science) necessarily incompatible with the principle of intelligent purpose or "intention," in the story of life? . . .

The facts coordinated in the theory of evolution overwhelmingly support the idea of man as a form of life descended ultimately from single cell types. The mechanics providing for this long process of change can be seen in the structure of the DNA molecule, which provides a scheme whereby we can visualize how change develops from generation to generation. Small changes in the sequence of chemical structures which make up the DNA molecule alter the code of information so that an offspring becomes slightly different from the parent. Thus, evolution.

The question, then, is whether intelligent purpose can be seen in this series of changes that resulted finally in man, or whether the changes are a product of random chance easily explained by mathematical principles? . . .

The advocates of the "chance" theory feel themselves solidly grounded since the very stuff of life, the DNA molecule, is seen to be a chemical compound and as such *must* follow those physical laws which determine chemical change. The law of mass action thus becomes all that is necessary to produce change. That is, if the hereditary material of the parent, the chromosomes, were presumed, for example, to each contain 1,000,000 molecules of DNA, then the chromosomes of the child might each have 999,999 molecules of DNA exactly like the parent's, and one, slightly different—therefore, change. The rule of the law of mass action states that a chemical reaction goes in the direction produced by the size of the number of participants. That is, if one side of a chemical equation has a large number of units, and the other side, a smaller number, the change will take place from the side of the large number toward the side of the smaller. Numbers rule, not purpose. . . .

Current theory holds that the only proposition that can explain the activity of the small particles is the principle of chance, for the chance *location* of certain particles . . . determined . . . that minute change which when multiplied by millions resulted in the emergence of man. . . .

Yet there is another concept which casts doubt on our ability to be certain of what takes place when the location of a small particle is to be estimated. The Heisenberg principle of indeterminacy has ruled that it is impossible simultaneously to evaluate all factors necessary to make an accurate assessment here. We can know that there are particles and that they move around; we can visualize various forces acting upon them. But we cannot know enough about such a system to be able to prove that only chance caused all the events. . . .

(Dr.) HAROLD KORETZ
Avoca, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In subjecting to critical analysis Teilhard de Chardin's credentials as a scientist and philosopher, Stephen Toulmin does a service to those attempting to place the works of this writer into proper focus. But in likening Descartes to Montaigne as one who decried the anthropocentric view of the world or despaired of finding "a single, unambiguous intention informing the whole course of cosmic history," he does a disservice to Montaigne.

Descartes and Teilhard were in fact brothers under the skin in their belief that man can find the key to universal knowledge. Far from being a skeptic, Descartes was the rugged individualist of philosophy who was sure he could make it where others had failed . . . by having permitted themselves to get off the track, to be led down blind alleys and to dead ends. . . . By their optimism about the future of man and science, Descartes and Teilhard are members of a long line of French thinkers going back to Rabelais and including Condorcet and August Comte. But this line is opposed by another—whose most distinguished representatives are Montaigne and Pascal—that holds that no matter how much man may progress, he will reach a limit beyond which he will never go.

ALBERT L. REINER
Scarsdale, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Both Toulmin and Rabut have a concept of causality which belongs in the 19th century. . . . No cause, not even a physical cause, produces its effect with necessity. If any statement made about the universe would have to apply with necessity in order to be valid or of interest, then science could say nothing at all. But a universal concept is not just a

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nominalistic figment of our imaginations, it has a correspondence to the world around us. Teilhard never said that evolution was a "necessary" process, nor did he say that evolution was a *random* process as Darwin and Toulmin believe: it is something in between, a preference or choice of one alternative over others. This is nowadays called a *stochastic* process. Toulmin and Rabut think of evolution in terms of primitive Darwinism and mechanistic causality, impute this view to Teilhard, and condemn him for their own misconception. Since for Teilhard human intellectual activity of the noosphere was part of evolution and since this is not necessarily, mechanistically, or automatically determined, it is quite evident that Teilhard did not think of evolution as a necessary process.

As regards Rabut's theological objection, he admits himself that a supernatural gift may become incarnate in the things of nature. This is exactly what Teilhard believed. He felt that not only man, but also nature has been redeemed and sanctified. God does not have to use an "ultracosmic force" (whatever that may be) and one can be a Christian without continual recourse to the First Cause and to miracles.

Toulmin links up Teilhard with Bergson and says that there is no scientific evidence for "vital pressures" playing a role in evolution. I am afraid that Dr. Toulmin just does not know enough biology; there is nothing mystical about it. As long as the main bud is growing on a plant, it will inhibit the development of secondary buds. When one cuts off the main bud, the competition is removed and the secondary buds develop. If, say, at the Tertiary Period, an intelligent insect or an intelligent bird had arisen, it might have had a chance to compete with the anthropoids. . . . "Vital pressure" is just another term for interspecific competition and as such there is plenty of scientific evidence for it.

Toulmin's main objection to Teilhard as a scientist is that he believes in orthogenesis. I wonder whether he knows that Professor Weidenreich, who was neither a Catholic, nor an "amateur," also believed in orthogenesis. It can be shown experimentally . . . that mutation is not a random process due exclusively to the environment but that the constitution of the organism determines which mutations are more probable than others. Evolution is only partly determined by the random forces of the environment; the other part depends on the response of the organism to the environment. Therefore Darwin and Toulmin are wrong about the mechanism by which evolution is achieved. You don't have to assume final causes to account for orthogenetic trends, it can be explained as a stochastic process in which each previous step conditions the subsequent one with a certain probability.

As to Toulmin's other objection, that Teilhard is a Lamarckian, in his place I wouldn't be too outspoken on this point. Not too long ago, Waddington in England proposed the so-called "canalization theory" to unify Mendelism and Lamarckism, and more recently Lorentz has shown that there are not only phenocopies, but also genocopies. I wouldn't be too surprised if within the next ten years . . . views which are now taboo came to be accepted. Of course, they would have to be proposed by the "in-group," not by the Russians.

(DR.) EDGAR TASCHDJIAN
Richmond Hill, New York

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Avant-Guardians

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . William Phillips's statement that "Burroughs's confessions . . . are bound to bore anyone" is simply nonsense ["The New Immoralists," April]. He presumes to dictate a prolegomena to any future taste by stipulating that only a morbid psyche, unsure of itself or the conditions of its identity, could respond to Burroughs's fantasies. This isn't discourse; it is propaganda. One could as well argue that only a person dissatisfied with his life would be interested in *Anna Karenina*, that only a man who wants to murder his father and sleep with his mother would find *Oedipus Rex* compelling.

"The sophisticated reader's failure . . . to be bored" *may* come from ennui. . . . It may, however, come from an awareness of the diversity of experience, and of strange similarities within diverse experiences, greater than the unsophisticated reader recognizes or possesses, or is willing to admit exists. The appreciation of any complex literature requires an

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ability and willingness to extend the psyche. Whether or not such an effort is valuable depends on the particular circumstances and the particular individual making it. One cannot settle this by fiat, and Mr. Phillips only reinforces any distrust of literary experience in his reader by turning into an apologist for the belligerently normal. . . .

STUART SILVERMAN
University of Illinois
Champaign, Illinois

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Genet has written two novels and four plays, but Mr. Phillips in reviewing his work finds room to mention only one—*The Thief's Journal*—although he does mention Mary McCarthy, Robert Lowell, Norman Mailer, and Susan Sontag—all contributors in good standing to *Partisan Review*. I think it good that Mr. Phillips reads *Partisan Review*, but in discussing Genet it might do to read Genet. . . .

Thus, he claims Genet to be an almost "documentary novelist," which could only be asserted by one who has not read Genet's novels, which are rambling, often almost incoherent, purposefully hallucinatory. . . . Moreover, the central theme of Genet's work is not homosexuality but the specter of Thanatos, of destruction ending in nothingness—a theme he pursues as Ahab did the White Whale. Sometimes the metaphor is of homosexuality, more often that of criminality. A central message throughout his work is that we are caught by the nightmare of history. The Christ who would save us becomes our jailer. Mr. Phillips states that Genet and Burroughs have "broken almost completely with the past." The message of both authors is that we *are* the past. . . .

Mr. Phillips has equated Genet and Burroughs with the homosexual vanguard and this in turn with "camp" culture. There is a relation between the three but they are not the same "camp." Genet and Burroughs are solitary writers by their nature though it is true that they have been taken up by the existentialists, and by the Beats. . . . Beat and Camp do have similar roots, a love for the *fin-de-siècle* style combined with pure American humor, and the leaders of both movements are to be found on the Lower East Side. . . . But these three movements—the solitary writings of Burroughs; the Beat world of Ginsberg, Corso, Kerouac; the Camp world of Warhol, Jack Smith, Red Grooms—are separate from each other. None of them is homosexual as such. . . .

The factor that they have in common is their attack, often playful, on what Mencken called the great boobs, the Grundies, the Miss Muffets—and the McCarthys—the sillies who think the sky is going to fall down. The sky may fall down; it's pretty radioactive already. But—as Genet and Burroughs point out and Mr. Phillips does not—the specter that threatens us (and modern literature) comes from the respectable paranoia of nations.

LEO SKIR
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Genet puts most modern critics into a dilemma: his work has the consistency of a visionary genius as well as the most extreme and monstrous perversity. I think that Mr. Phillips dismissed him too easily.

Western critics rarely judge literature on other than formal grounds. Perhaps their detachment is a fault. . . . Genet hates insensitivity so much that he is driven to make his readers feel, and it is easiest to make them feel discomfort and pain. . . .

CAREY LINN
New York City

The Quest for God

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In his article, "Judaism & the Meaning of Life" [April], Emil L. Fackenheim says, "the Jewish search for meaning in history" is limited. "Not only is the *disclosure* of meaning in history fragmentary; the meaning *itself* is fragmentary." I get no hint from his article, however, that there is such a thing as meaning which is *not* fragmentary . . . not determined by how it is searched for but by what it is. Before we can talk of the "Jewish God," we must talk of "God."

T. S. Eliot said Pascal succeeded in delineating God where Descartes failed, "for in Descartes the element of *esprit de géométrie* is excessive." But this is what attracts me to Descartes, whose admitted failure to define "God" we have no right to blame upon his mathematical method. Actually mathematical explicitness is the only way of achieving exact communication with fel-

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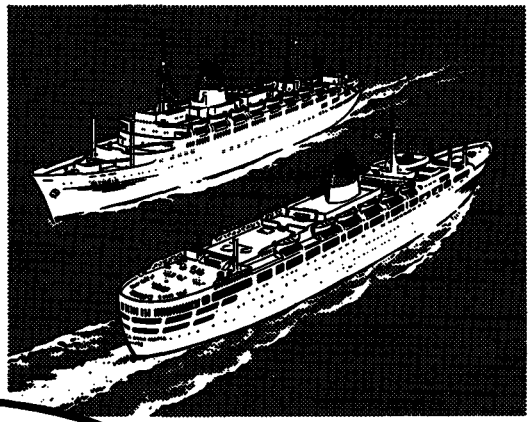

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low-men; in this sense, it is a social science. . . . Dr. Fackenheim keeps using the terms "infinite" and "finite," but what do they mean except insofar as they are defined in mathematics? If there are other meanings, they, more than God, are a complete mystery. If God is infinitely above the reach of man in every respect, he must be beyond man's worship. . . . For the life of me, I can find no connection with my experience or thinking in "the Infinity of the Divine, the finitude of the human, and the meeting between them." If Mr. Fackenheim is right, and "these all remain, then, wherever Judaism preserves its substance; and the mystery and tension of this meeting permeate all else," please read me out of the faith. Why take "mystery and tension" when it is possible to have absolute certainty?

Charles Hartshorne (in *The Logic of Perfection, and Other Essays in Neoclassical Metaphysics,* 1962) demolishes the widely held opinion that the "ontological argument" for God's existence as presented by Anselm or by Descartes was refuted by Kant. . . . Kant's alleged refutation . . . fails to distinguish between necessary and contingent existence. The concept of divinity or perfection is not contingent. . . .

Either the exemplification of the concept is impossible or it is necessary. (It did not occur to Anselm or to Descartes that it might be impossible, being self-contradictory. There is no God in existence exemplifying a self-contradictory concept, since such a concept is just gibberish.) Since nothing is strictly impossible unless it is inherently contradictory or meaningless, the choice is not between atheism and theism, but only between positivism and theism. "God" is without coherent meaning or exists necessarily. . . .

Pascal rejected Descartes's "God of the philosophers" in favor of the "God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob," and he was right in this. There was nothing wrong in Descartes's method, contrary to T. S. Eliot. But he should have accepted the "Jewish" God, rather than the pseudo-philosophical mumbo-jumbo, taken for God.

SIDNEY KORETZ

Washington, D. C.

MR. FACKENHEIM writes:

My term "Jewish God" was short for "God as experienced and believed in in Judaism." If this God *is,* then He is not a Jewish God but

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God—the God of all men. And if He is "determined" *only* by how He is "searched for" from some specifically Jewish perspective (i.e., if He contrasts with "what" God "is"), then He is a mere illusion.

Mr. Koretz demands that we "talk of God" before we "talk of the Jewish God" because he presupposes that it is philosophically possible, and religiously necessary, to make God the object of detached philosophical thought before entering into a committed relation with Him in the religious life. Hence his views of the religious relevance (if not the validity) of the ontological argument. Hence also his view that the terms "finite" and "infinite" have none but a mathematical meaning. Hence, finally, his total failure to grasp what I meant by "fragmentary meaning."

I would not deny outright the possibility of making God the object of detached philosophical thought. But I would deny the religious relevance of such thought, and hence of the ontological argument (except in its Hegelian version, in which thought is not detached and God not an object). And I would certainly deny (as Anselm did) that one must demonstrate God's existence before entering into a relation with Him. (Anselm prayed to the "Christian God" to the effect that he might succeed in demonstrating the existence of "God.")

Are the terms "finite" and "infinite" necessary in the religious relationship, and if so can they be understood from within that relationship? They are necessary in Judaism so long as its God remains the One who has smashed all idols, and so long as its man remains less than divine and yet free over against God. And they can be understood, if not by detached thought (mathematical or any other) then by the symbolic thought which springs from within the religious relationship, and which is characteristic of biblical and rabbinic literature. Does Mr. Koretz really not understand the rabbinic dictum that "all is foreseen yet freedom is given"? Or the traditional Jew when he lives through the year by the conviction that though "he cannot complete the work yet he is not free to desist from it," and when he nevertheless confesses on Yom Kippur that "we have done no works"? I doubt that the tyranny of philosophical preconceptions has moved him that far from the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

According to normative Jewish teaching, meaning is fragmentary not because we cannot rise above our relationship with God in order to view all reality *sub specie aeternitatis*. It is fragmentary because we have failed to complete our work *in* that relationship, and because we and our world are such as to require for redemption the work of God as well as that of man. For the Jew, completeness of meaning is to be found not in an eternity grasped by a thought which has fled from the world, but is to be found in the future, by a life of work and prayer lived in the world.

Correcting the Record

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In his article, "Two for SNCC" [April], Robert Penn Warren quotes Stokely Carmichael on the subject of an article by Loren Miller, Sr., in the October 20, 1962, issue of *The Nation* ("Farewell to the Liberals, A Negro View"). Carmichael characterizes the article as "ridiculous" and alleges that Judge Miller, a Vice-President of the NAACP, got "hopped up with this Black Nationalism"; he implies that the article shows how everybody [was] afraid to attack Malcolm X.

These comments are not only unfair to Judge Miller, but have no relation whatever to the article he wrote. Nowhere in the article was Malcolm X mentioned, directly or indirectly, and only once was any reference made to black nationalism or a black nationalist organization. Nothing in the article supports Carmichael's characterizations of it. . . .

The *Nation* article deals with the position of the present Negro leadership in the civil-rights revolution *vis-à-vis* the white liberal. Judge Miller variously refers to this leadership (led by King and Abernathy, et al.) as "the young Negro militants" and the "direct actionists." (Carmichael may have misread these references as references to black nationalist movements.) Judge Miller states what he believes their positions to be, and sums up the point of the article in his last paragraph:

> Their message is plain: To liberals a fond farewell, with thanks for services rendered, until you are ready to re-enlist as foot sold-

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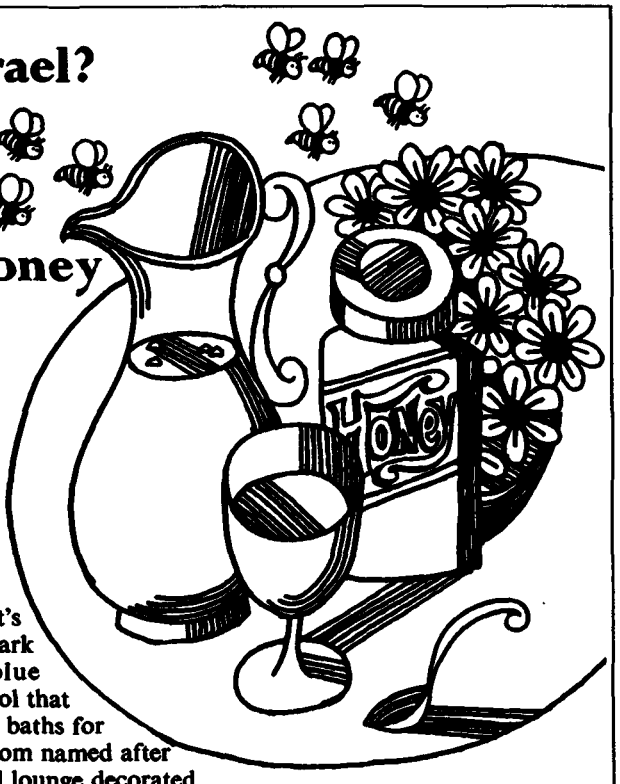

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iers and subordinates in a Negro-led, Negro-officered army under the banner of Freedom Now.

One of the more interesting points of Warren's article was the comment by Robert Moses concerning the Negro students' resentment of the whites (liberals?) who go into command positions in their, the Negroes', movement. This is the essential point also of the *Nation* article, written by Loren Miller, Sr., in 1962; and white liberals, to which group one of the undersigned belongs, do not, even now, fully realize or accept the importance of this idea in the civil-rights movement.

DAVID M. ROTHMAN
LOREN MILLER, JR.
Los Angeles, California

Ethnic Affinities

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Marshall Sklare is convinced that Milton Gordon has a conflict about his own Jewish identity and that Gordon's *Assimilation in American Life* "is suffused with the problem in its most characteristic form" ["Assimilation & the Sociologists," May]. The key supposedly is in Gordon's assertion that the culturally and socially mobile ethnic group should be free to choose between the old ethnic world and the new American one. "It is clearly the Jew in Gordon that is speaking," Sklare claims, "the products of no other group in America feel compelled to defend the right to assimilate." Furthermore, Sklare insists, only Jews . . . feel intimidated and guilty about abandoning the old ties.

There is, of course, ample evidence to refute Sklare's curious, indeed remarkable, assertions. The studies done on immigration, the second-generation conflict, ethnic communities, and ethnic identity by numerous reputable scholars show that the conflict Gordon describes has been experienced by socially mobile Irish-Catholics, Italians, Poles, Negroes, etc. I would be glad to supply Sklare with a bibliography of thirty or forty items, some of which are cited in Gordon's book, on non-Jewish groups which explore various aspects of this conflict.

Finally, I do not know whether Milton Gordon has a "Jewish identity problem" nor is that question of any importance to anyone except Gordon and his family. I do know that he has written an excellent scholarly book about an important subject. There are propositions in his work which can be reinvestigated, as he, himself, would be the first to suggest; but, Mr. Sklare, let us leave the gratuitous task of psychoanalyzing the author to less responsible minds.

MICHAEL PARENTI
State University of New York
Stony Brook, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

For several years now, the leadership of the Jewish community in the United States—religious, political, cultural, literary, and intellectual—has been in a state of anxiety and distress over what it sees as threats to the continued existence and vitality of Judaism in this country. The most violent responses seem to spring from evidence that an ever-increasing number of Jewish-born men and women are marrying partners whose background and upbringing are non-Jewish. (I am careful not to imply that they are of different "beliefs" at the time of their marriages.)

The typical response, even from otherwise intelligent and reasonable men, is to . . . threaten, forbid, and finally to reject anyone daring to contemplate what is called "in-

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termarriage." Aside from the absurdity of their response and its total lack of positive effect, . . . it is a strange thing to see the leaders of Judaism taking a stance more reactionary, more rigid, more irrational than any other major religious group in the world, certainly in the United States. Aside from looking and being ridiculous, they are at the same time driving away their young people who dare to take an individualistic stand in choosing their pattern of life—surely the element to be cherished most by any dynamic group.

The sad part is that the . . . demands being made on all religions by the modern era . . . are worthy of real thought and soul-searching, of agonized reappraisal and honest questioning. . . . What are the positive values Judaism can offer us when we are unthreatened by outside attack, but remain, along with all humanity, troubled and uncertain in our state of *inner* being? What does the Jewish religion say to the souls of its people? These are the real questions to which the intellectual and religious leadership should be addressing itself. Intermarriage and assimilation are irrelevant to the problem. . . .

The Temple congregations are concerned with beautiful buildings and institutional trappings; the rabbis are so involved in bar-mitzvahs, weddings, and funerals that they can't find the time to sit and talk to a perplexed Jew about what his religion can offer him that is meaningful to his life—his unspoken, private life; . . . the leaders of the large organizations are hysterical about Jewish boys and girls daring to commit the treason of falling in love and marrying "non-Jewish" partners, instead of proposing that the Jewish community take the trouble to welcome both partners, and make them see what, if anything, Judaism and Jewish culture have to offer them.

This letter was prompted by reading Mr. Sklare who, in his own way, is even more defensive than the author he criticizes, but there have been a whole series of articles in COMMENTARY, a great many speeches reported in the New York *Times*, a lot of silly lectures given at synagogues and organizational meetings, and I think a lot of people see through the breast-beating and wonder what it will accomplish and what is being lost in the meantime.

(MRS.) DOROTHY M. UHLIG
Merion Station, Pennsylvania

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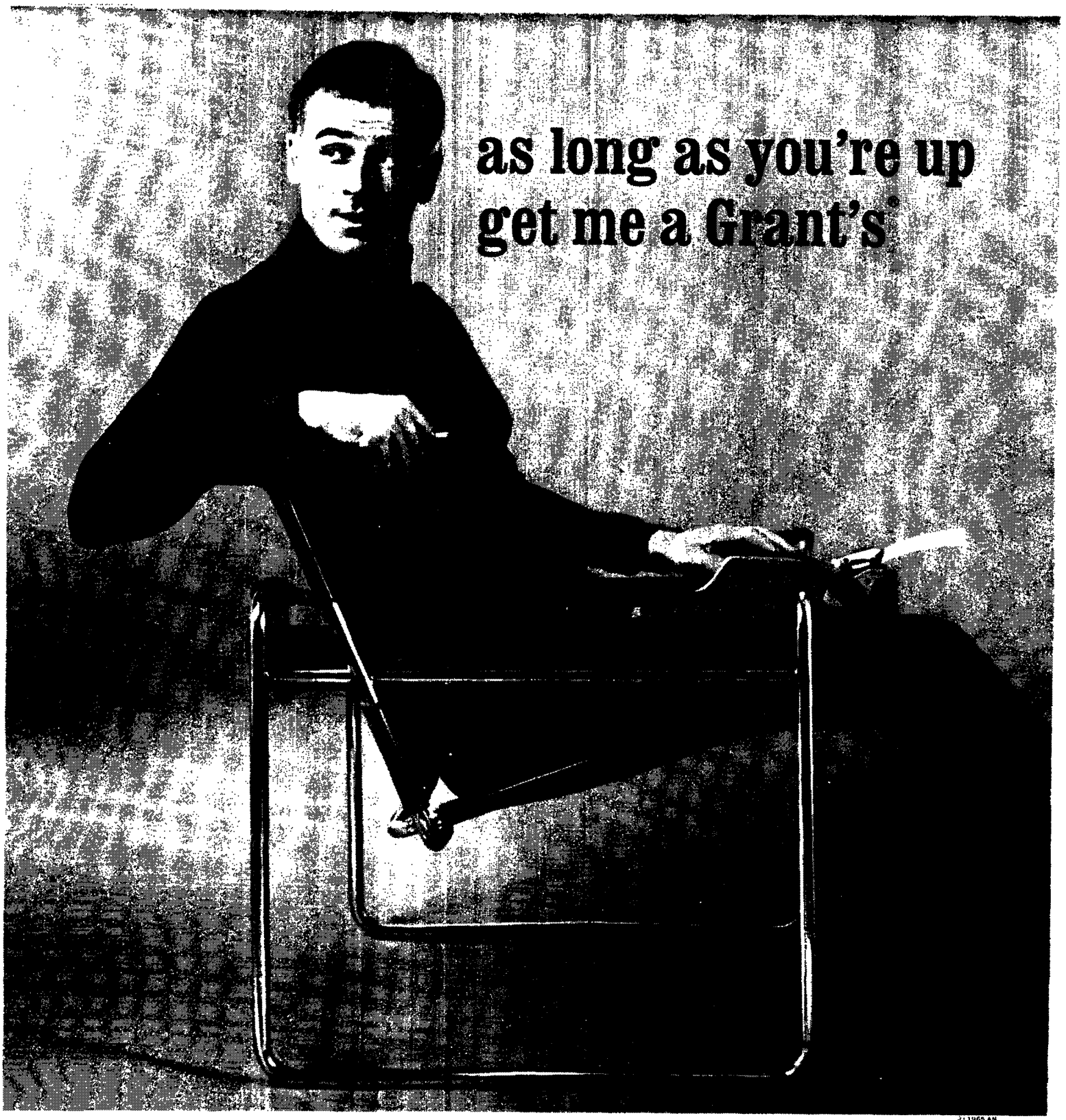

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Please. One Scotch in the triangular bottle. That's right. The one with 8 on it. Yes, Grant's is 8 years old. I guess that's why it has the taste you acquire on the spot. You can't rush quality. Or hurry lightness. So take your time with the drink, dear.

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CAN CULTURE EXPLODE?

Notes on Subsidizing the Arts

STANLEY KAUFFMANN

TWO EVENTS of high importance in American cultural history occurred last March. The first was the publication of the Rockefeller Panel Report on the performing arts. The second came two days later (a coincidence?): President Johnson's proposal to Congress of legislation for the establishment of a National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities. Neither of these events was completely novel. Foundations and councils have long been investigating aspects of the American arts, and dozens of bills to support the arts in various ways have been proposed in Congress over the years, with the first bill for an arts council in 1877. But the Rockefeller Report, which assimilated thirty-one other reports prepared for its panel, is the first comprehensive one in its field; and the Johnson proposal is the first for government spending on the arts to be made by a President since Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal measures, which arose out of the need to stem unemployment, not out of an interest in art.

Few persons to whom the idea of art is vital can hear of such matters as this foundation report or this proposed bill without an initial shudder—or, at the calmest, a small smile. This present inquiry is in fact intended for those who have experienced that shudder and who may indeed have experienced nothing else. For it is my premise that there is quite literally no choice but to face the historicity of these two events. In so many other fields—political and economic and educational policy—we have seen example after sickening example of attempts to ignore or reverse the flow of history instead of trying to influence it, and with the same unvarying result: the future is resigned and consigned to those least worthy to direct it, often the very enemies we want to avoid.

Quite apart from personal preferences, the direction of American cultural movement is clear. Arts centers proliferate around the country; Lincoln Center and Los Angeles are only the best known at present. More than twenty state arts councils exist or are authorized. In 1962, President Kennedy appointed a Special Consultant on the Arts; in 1964, President Johnson appointed a Special Assistant. Profound changes are inevitable in the arts. I contend, without paradox, that only those who are opposed to change, or are suspicious of it, are qualified to superintend those changes; and must certainly be concerned to influence them.

BETWEEN THE bill and the report there are several similarities and one major difference. The bill embraces all the arts (including fashion design!) and all the humanities including "those aspects of the social sciences which have humanistic content and employ humanistic methods." The report is concerned only with the performing arts, from which, in the panel's definition, radio, television, and films are excluded. The bill and the report are addressed to some common questions: the economic status and problems of the arts; accomplishment in the arts relative to other national accomplishments; the measurable growth of public interest in art; how to bring the arts to regions of the country that do not have, or see, much of them.

The bill (S. 1483, H. 6050) would set up a tripartite body: a so-called Endowment for the Arts, another for the Humanities, and a third group, a Federal Council, to correlate the activities of the first two. The bill would authorize the appropriation of $10 million a year to be used for grants-in-aid to non-profit groups and "in appropriate cases" to individuals. Most, though not all, of this money is to be awarded on the basis of matching grants, and additional funds up to $5 million each would be available to the Endowments to match contributions they may get from private sources. There are also provisions for teacher-training in the arts and the humanities. Each Endowment would have a chairman and an internal advisory council; the over-all supervisory Federal Council would consist of these Endowment chairmen, the Commissioner of Education (whose Office this bill hopes to "strengthen" in responsibility *vis-à-vis* the arts and humanities), the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, the Director of the National Science Foundation, the Librarian of Congress, and a member designated

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by the Secretary of State (who has in his department an Assistant Secretary for Education and Cultural Affairs).

The bill forbids any government department or employee to exercise any control over any non-federal group dealing with the Foundation. (As assurance, we are often told in this connection that the National Science Foundation and the National Institutes of Health report no government interference. For some, this assurance has limited conviction: no scientific report is likely, for instance, to contain the four-letter words that a new government-supported play might contain.) President Johnson said in his accompanying message: "Freedom is an essential condition for the artist, and in proportion as freedom is diminished, so is the prospect of artistic achievement." The President's statement is historically untrue, but sponsors of this kind of legislation always say something like it, and it is probably healthy that they make the ritual bow.

The Humanities Endowment, not our particular concern here, is intended to "develop and encourage pursuit of a national policy for the promotion of progress and scholarship in the humanities"; help research; foster interchange; support publication of scholarly works. The net effect is as of any educational foundation.

But the Arts Endowment is a much pricklier subject. Its principal purpose is to grant aid to non-profit groups; and here is the root difference between the two Endowments. The best work in the humanities is usually associated with non-profit institutions: universities, study centers, and so on. The best work in the arts is more likely to be associated with profitable or unprofitable, rather than non-profit, institutions. It is obvious that the government is reluctant to become an investor in theatrical or musical productions or in trade-book publishing (although, as *Variety* pointed out, an impresario's private foundation, like the David Merrick Foundation, could benefit under the act). But essentially this constriction on aid is incongruous with a society in which many of the best people in the arts—especially the performing arts—are also capitalist entrepreneurs or are connected with them. The additional provision for grants to "appropriate" individuals is intended to help in the less expensive arts, but it can be doubted that there will be many grants to painters and photographers in the foreseeable future. Grants to groups, non-profit ones, will probably seem much the safer course.

As for the Arts Endowment chairman, the immediate choice seems plain. This bill would shift the President's present National Council on the Arts to the new National Endowment. The head of the present Council, and the presumable first chairman of the Endowment, is Roger L. Stevens, a theatrical producer who has earned his distinction by operating, to a large extent, in the upper reaches of popular drama.

Thus at once the Arts section of the bill defines its own two chief limitations. First, the government wants to respect the ideal of private enterprise at the same time that its very action proves that private enterprise—which has given us most of our art—is incapable of fulfilling new needs. Second, decisions on grants for art projects will be in the hands of a chairman who has been appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate. That chairman will have a council of twenty-four advisers but he will not be bound by them; decisions on grants will finally be his. Thus his judgment must inevitably set the tone of the whole enterprise. The chairman will rarely be the personal choice of a President; he will be suggested by presidential advisers and will be someone acceptable to a Senate committee. As far as can be predicted, he is likely to be a Stevens, a well-meaning man, ambitious within the bounds of irreproachably bourgeois taste. The bill that provides for non-interference with grantees cannot order imagination and perception in the grantor.

THE CONTRAST is sharp between possibilities of useful aid in the humanities and in the arts. Scholarship has at least as many dullards and almost as many fakers as the arts, but qualifications are more reliably demonstrable. A list of reputable teaching posts and publications by reputable presses will probably certify a sound art historian. A list of big gallery shows and good reviews for a painter may indicate talent; it may also indicate merely clever politicking, a flair for vogue, even opportune sexual proclivity. Everyone wants to help the arts these days, and as a piece of proposed legislation, this bill has a quite genuinely inspiriting tone. But it leaves us with hard queries. Can the arts—the performing arts in particular—be effectively helped while there is a proscription against helping *any* worthy enterprise? Can non-artists choose the man who chooses the artists to be helped—and should decisions on grants be left ultimately to one man? Can one man be competent in all the arts, even with twenty-four assorted advisers? Instead of a chairman, would it not be more sensible to have an Executive Committee of, say, five members? And since the President would nominate the members on advice, should not the bill specify that he take such advice from professionals—from at least one practicing artist or critic in each of the arts mentioned in the bill?

If these two changes were made, then the Senate's right to disapprove ought properly to be limited to matters outside the province of art (improbity, for example). I do not imply that all Senators are *ipso facto* boors, but if the bill prevents the government from interfering with artists, it ought to complete the phrase and prevent the government from interfering with the judges of art. Such a senatorial limitation would

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be without precedent, but the subject is without precedent.

No opinion of the proposed budget is possible in a vacuum. Five million dollars can be a huge waste or it can be far too small a sum if sensibly allocated. There was an early fear that much of the money might, under the non-profit specification, go to amateur groups; the Senate has added provisions "giving emphasis to . . . the maintenance and encouragement of professional excellence." The fear was probably unjustified that admittedly amateur groups would get funds, but the fear was, and is, legitimate if the word "amateur" is used connotatively. There is likely to be such a dread of backing the commercial, such an eagerness to serve the Muses purely, that many high-minded groups may benefit whose sole qualifications are their high-mindedness and the fact that they fit the bill's definition of "non-profit." This eagerness is already evident in the bill's inclusion of all the arts and several crafts. For example, folk art is listed, but how does one subsidize it? Isn't subsidy a contradiction of the very term "folk art"? Does the bill envision a grant to a brothel barrelhouse pianist? Or does it mistake singers such as Joan Baez for folk artists?

Still, on balance, the bill can be welcomed, if only as a necessary first step. For reasons to be discussed later, government subsidy is becoming inevitable. A first bill needs to be passed and used: to get administrative wrinkles ironed out and, more important, to begin to answer—in practice—the fundamental question of what government subsidy can actually do in this country. Minimally, it can, without much doubt, accomplish some good in nourishing proved musical and dance groups, possibly even some theater groups, and helping them to tour. Beyond that, there is much to be determined, and the determination may as well begin. But two large, related reservations are imperative. Partially the bill grows out of an urge to fill the greater leisure provided by our society's technology and affluence; but there is no direct connection between leisure and art. Why not subsidize more bowling alleys or hobby groups? Any view of art as an added recreational facility, preferable because high-toned, must be crippling from the start. Second, despite the emphasis on American creativity in its language, there is no necessary connection between the bill and a genuine American culture. This, too, will be discussed.

As of late June, the bill had passed the Senate by a voice vote "without a murmur of dissent" (*Variety*). Previously, the Senate's Labor and Public Welfare Committee had approved it with an "apparently unanimous voice vote" (New York *Times*). The committee's unanimity, said the *Times*, "reflected a growing sentiment in Congress to aid the creative and performing arts." Another way to state the matter may be that the bill's existence, the President's sponsorship, the committee approval, and the Senate passage represent political acumen sensing a public mood.

THAT PUBLIC MOOD is underscored and explicated in the report sponsored by the Rockefeller Brothers Fund. Entitled *The Performing Arts: Problems and Prospects*,* it is signed by thirty panel members, including an architect, a museum director, the presidents of Neiman-Marcus, CBS, and the Retail Clerks International Association, and an editor of the *Ladies Home Journal*. Professionals of music and drama are on the panel but none of dance, although dance is one of the three arts examined.

The purpose of the report is to tell the American public what is happening in our performing arts, the "trouble" they are in, the support that they have received and that they need, how the help can and should be given. The panel states that its data came from previous papers, arts organizations, witnesses, interviews, questionnaires, all of which, it notes with perhaps a touch of pride, were "deliberated for more than eighty hours at five two-day meetings." The members report that they "encountered considerable difficulty in obtaining adequate information. Our experience confirms our judgment that among the key problems of the performing arts in America today are the lack of sufficient data and a central source of information."

One might not have thought of these as "key" problems. This approach to the performing arts renders their problems analagous (as the panel boasts) to such matters as foreign policy and military preparedness, which have already been treated by this Foundation. But the fact that the arts *are* being put in that analagous relation by a group of eminent Americans is of extraordinary social importance; and it prepares us, in a negative sense, for the net effect of the report.

That effect is one of platitude, pedestrian perception, Rotarian ambition. The report soberly envisages a nation teeming with drama devotees, concert-goers, and ballet-lovers. Doubtless it has its uses as the first comprehensive factual study in the field; doubtless, also, it is mechanistic and painfully inharmonious with its subject. It is so thoroughly a contemporary product that it is as much a warning as a help.

In Chapter One, "The Arts in America," we get again, as with President Johnson, the ritual bow to the freedom essential to the artist. One does not deride the thesis, but it simply does not fit the facts. Did the performances of Gieseking and Flagstad deteriorate under the Nazis? Has life under Stalin and Khrushchev maimed the art of Ulanova or Oistrakh? As for writers: Did Molière wither when he had to alter *Tartuffe* to suit Louis XIV? Did prison itself keep Cervantes or Bunyan from writing? Freedom, which is al-

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ways relative, is certainly pleasant and preferable, but these ritual bows typify the non-artist's sentimental view of some of the realities of art, alerting us to the quality of perception at hand.

Each chapter contains italicized conclusions, as tenets in a credo. This first chapter states the tenet, much quoted, that the place of the arts "is not on the periphery of society but at its center, that they are not just a form of recreation but are of central importance to our well-being and happiness." It goes on: "In the panel's view, this status will not be widely achieved unless artistic excellence is the constant goal of every artist and arts organization, and mediocrity is recognized as the ever-present enemy of true progress in the development of the arts." In terms of audience satisfaction many mediocre artists, and worse, have contributed substantially to public well-being and happiness. Even more curious, what is the connection between artistic excellence and moving the arts to the center of society? Many excellent artists have not been at the center. The statement implies that what has kept the arts from being central in American life is the fact that they have not been excellent. For much of musical performance, dance creation and performance, this is simply not true. Many chamber groups, ballet and modern dance groups, recognized as first-class by experts, are far from central: would starve without help. The reason for their peripheral position would seem to lie elsewhere.

We come to practical matters in Chapter Two, "The Performing Arts—Today and Tomorrow." Here are quoted some of the well-bruited statistics about the increased number of performing groups: orchestras, opera companies, theatrical and dance companies. Then, with a show of rigor, the report deflates these figures by stating that most of this growth has been in amateur groups. The reduction is not as drastic, however, as that made by Igor Stravinsky in a recent interview in the *New York Review of Books*:

> Some recent hoopla on the nation's culture reported by *Time* magazine included the claim that our symphony orchestras have grown in number "from 800 to 1300." [Rockefeller says 1,401] . . . . The count . . . I can assure you, is close to a hundred per cent inflated. Of those deserving the name we have more likely grown from eight to thirteen, though I doubt that as many as thirteen offer full-time livelihood to their entire personnel [Rockefeller says 54], and I am certain that there are not thirteen capable of preparing first-rate performances of the new works of our outstanding younger composers.

This makes interesting reading after the panel's earlier statement about mediocrity.

Chapter Two also states that Broadway is "being bypassed by those who wish to offer and those who wish to accept the theater as one of America's flourishing art forms. It is this process that has most significance today." It has indeed, so long as we remember that a group does not become an art theater merely by bypassing Broadway. As tenet, this chapter "recommends that the artistic goal of the nation be the day when the performing arts are considered a permanent year-round contribution to communities throughout the country, and our artists are considered as necessary as our educators." Aside from the tone of chicken-in-every-pot wholesomeness, it can be noted that the goal offered has no precedent in recorded history and small basis in valid cultural hope.

The next chapter, "Box Office and Other Earned Income," says that non-profit organizations should not be expected to pay their way out of receipts. This takes us further down the road indicated by the Johnson bill. If these ideas are implemented, and profit-aimed organizations are debarred from aid, then they are going to be forced more and more into commercial productions to survive. It can be argued that most profit-aimed groups are largely commercial now. More pointedly, however, it can be argued that *all* performing groups ought to be subsidized and, commercial or not (for reasons to be discussed), are going to need aid in the future. The facts prophesy that, in a matter of years, very little performance will be financed entirely by venture capital, that the majority of performing groups—even the sheerly commercial in content—will have to find subsidized modes in order to exist. One senses that the drafters of both the bill and the report are aware of this eventuality. The persistent use in both documents of the "non-profit" formulation seems a device to avoid the charge of creeping socialism.

In the following three chapters, the most useful ones, the report considers how deficits (presumably in these non-profit groups) have been and can be met. There are three sources of funds: individual, corporate, and foundation contributions. In all three categories, a very small proportion of annual donations is for the arts, and a small proportion of that for the performing arts. Only 2 per cent of our national charitable contributions, given by individuals, "goes to cultural programs of all kinds, with the performing arts receiving much less than half the total." Out of the millions in corporate donations, at most 3 to 4 per cent (from $16 to $21 million in 1963) goes to the arts. Foundation support is similarly minuscule—1 to 2 per cent of their spendable funds assigned to the performing arts. Local foundations are urged to particular activity in the field of recurring grants. National foundations are urged to concentrate on planning, innovation, "means of solving basic problems." *All* foundations are urged to be more encouraging of the bold and venturesome—advice that will be seconded by those of us who feel that foundations tend to be as bound by records of past success and prospects of future success as any commercial manager.

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WE COME, THEN, to the major subject of government support. The panel believes, naturally, that government support should not vitiate private incentive. It urges local governments to support their local arts organizations and to encourage study of the arts in their school systems; it suggests that state governments be principally concerned to make art available to citizens who have no local arts council. Various lesser aspects of present and possible federal support are touched upon. First (without knowledge of the Johnson bill) the panel approves the development of the present National Council on the Arts, which is headed by Mr. Stevens. The panel also notes with approval the overseas Cultural Presentations Program, a program which has been roundly—and, I think, soundly—scored by W. McNeil Lowry and Gertrude S. Hooker of the Ford Foundation in a paper presented at the American Assembly in 1962. Then such matters as copyright flaws and tax inequities are considered—all relatively easily accomplishable, compared with other proposals in this report, all long overdue of accomplishment.

At this point direct federal aid—one of the subjects of the Johnson bill—steps on like a star with a delayed entrance. Again there is a warning that aid must not encourage mediocrity, which sounds odd after the endorsement of Stevens and the overseas program. There is favorable comment on government aid in Britain and Western Europe and a note that one of the studies prepared for this panel "disclosed virtually no complaint that public funds impaired artistic freedom" in Europe. It is a point worth emphasis, but again the panel has left an observation incomplete. Perhaps the European condition obtains because of factors not applicable in the United States: some long-established traditions (for instance, state theaters and operas); homogeneous national cultures; the very smallness of some countries. May it not be misleading to suggest that parallel actions would work as smoothly here as abroad?

The panel concludes that, for the present, federal aid can be most effectively provided by matching grants to meet the capital needs of arts organizations—in other words, to help them principally with building facilities. Thus the report is much more conservative than the bill which, while it specifies building aid as one purpose, is not limited to it and is also not limited to matching grants. While supplying funds for building, the panel says, the government can gain experience in other forms of aid for the arts. This may be called the Lincoln Center syndrome: experience in real estate provides knowledge in art. The risks in the bill look cheerier after the stodgy portfolio-planning mentality of the report.

A chapter on "Organization and Management of the Arts" tells us: "As talent is needed to create and perform a work of art, so equal talent —though of a different sort—is needed to create and govern the institutions that provide the settings for these arts." For me, the phrase "though of a different sort" is the most enchanting in the book. Board members, we are told, should be as carefully screened as performers. Then we get four pages on artistic direction and artistic standards, all the space that the report gives to these topics. A sample of the level of thought: "Selection of artists is one of the most difficult responsibilities of the artistic director." Another:

> It would be foolish, for example, for the conductor of the average community orchestra to demand from his orchestra a level of performance exceeding the competence of the orchestra. The real challenge is to strive for an ever closer balance between the actual and the attainable and to make measurable progress toward the time when all conditions of quality can be considered relevant in planning future programs.

Beneath the sales-manual prose, what can we find here other than advice not to disturb the original level of competence and also to make progress? The paragraph ends, of course, with another warning against mediocrity.

Next we consider "The University": as trainer of future professionals, as sustainer of artists-in-residence, as provider of means for experiment (electronic music is a prime instance); and as impresario. The panel urges that more support be given the weakening programs for professional training and that the imbalance between support of the physical sciences and the arts-humanities be redressed. The function of the university as impresario seems to me understated. Anyone who visits universities and colleges around the country knows that they often provide audiences as alert as any that can be found, much more so than most older audiences. Some kind of intercollegiate network—arranged by region or by emphasis of interest—could provide remunerative circuits for theatrical companies and would even encourage the production of independent films.

The penultimate chapter notes approvingly that, with the aid of the Bureau of Audio-Visual Instruction, the Phoenix Theatre of New York played *Hamlet* to more than 100,000 students—to me, a matter of some regret since I thought the production incompetent, one that could please only those who feel that "any Shakespeare is better than no Shakespeare." (In analogy, would educators feel that any college is better than no college?) For me, this *Hamlet* statistic is further evidence that the panel, despite its iterated warnings against mediocrity, is subject to drugging by numbers. Further—straying from its self-defined province—it states that "the commercial television industry has a definite responsibility to improve its methods of presentation and programing in the performing arts." This is about as helpful as declaring that *McCall's* has "a definite responsibility" to improve its literary standards.

The panel thinks, too, that the performing arts

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need better criticism. It probably also thinks that bankrupt men need money. It suggests the possibility of circuit-riding critics serving several newspapers in smaller communities. If nothing else, this is a mine of suggestions for farce.

The last chapter tells us yet again that we must not allow our focus on quality to weaken or shift, also that art is beautiful and relevant. In conclusion, the panel says that it knows that the report bristles with problems to which there are no easy answers.

I HAVE EXAMINED the report at this length precisely because it exemplifies a current national state of mind: a combination of social good will and cultural myopia ("Let's get together and *lick* this thing"). Grant that the report is intended as a statistical and organizational analysis, not as a philosophical essay; still no work in this domain can be licensed to be so lacking in sensitivity, perception, vision.

There is, to be sure, some value in its economic details and advice. Like the Johnson bill, it recognizes—by implication, never by clear confrontation—the existence of what we may call the Golden Vise. On the one hand, higher wages, shorter hours, more education, have tremendously increased the audience for entertainment (including, but not limited to, the arts). On the other hand, the very same factors—obviously happy in themselves—have tremendously and disproportionately increased the cost of producing that entertainment for that increased audience. In a free economy, as general affluence grows, the condition will probably be aggravated; the vise will tighten as both jaws grow stronger. More people will want more entertainment (and art), the cost of producing it will continue to zoom. The bill and the report are addressed to alleviating that pressure—a continuing pressure, which will need continuing relief.

But as usual, economics is far from the whole story. Serious consideration of the bill and the report has to leave the organizational and quantitative for the qualitative, has in fact to consider fundamental questions and doubts about cultural direction.

Neither the bill nor the report is much concerned with the qualitative subject of taste. One does not look for dogma but for some knowledge that taste, which cannot be absolute, is the only absolute requirement. Thus there is much talk of training, but who are to be the teachers? For example, most teachers of acting that I have seen lately have either been Method cultists or academic preparers of more academic preparers. What are the panel's recommendations—even preferences? In music, which conductors are admired? Does the panel prefer the way George Szell conducts and administers an orchestra or the methods of Leonard Bernstein? The panel evidently felt that it would be out of place to offer recommendations and, in its blandness, makes it seem that such recommendations do not matter. It just goes on (with some questionable laudatory references) abhorring mediocrity.

The problem is of course not soluble; but without a constant preoccupation with its insolubility, any statement on cultural extension is incomplete and possibly suspect. For on this depends everything else, including the allocation of funds.

We are facing the moment, as the bill and report make clear in spite of themselves, when a bourgeois civilization, having prospered for two hundred years, is no longer content to be tolerated in relation to art; it is powerful enough to take over art, is increasingly impatient for all the benefits it imagines it sees in an originally aristocratic heritage. Much of 19th-century art broadened the base of the aristocratic tradition; much of 20th-century art breaks completely with it. Still, concepts of social and artistic elitism are so thoroughly ingrained in our culture that some rude questions arise. *Can* our art—at its best—be brought to a wider audience? Why, in fact, do they want it? Is the obviously increased demand anything more than what has been well described as culture-vulturism? Is there a vital cultural future for our society? Or will our "cultural explosion," energized by statistics, simply blow up the culture we have into larger superficial proportions—as an electric mixer makes a pint of cream seem larger by whipping in masses of air?

CONSIDERATION of these matters had best begin with some statement of critical view. For me, the only healthy and rational conspectus of artistic judgment—particularly in relation to the future—is a conservative one, now often called "elitist": a view whose standards are distilled from the best art we have had and applies them to the new art we get; which insists on the movement of the audience up to the best art, not vice versa; which believes fiercely in the unachievably good no matter how good the achieved is. I mean here to circumvent the debate on Masscult, Midcult, and High Cult, a discourse of continuing importance but not pertinent here. We can assume that both the bill and the report are concerned with high art. Gian-Carlo Menotti and Christopher Fry, or their equivalents, will certainly appear in the repertories of Endowment-supported groups, but the concern is with Mozart and Beethoven and Brahms, with Shakespeare and Ibsen and Shaw (all the more certainly because they are "safe" names), and it is in relation to art at that level that prospects must be considered.

Forward we go into whirling expansion—particularly of the performing arts. It is antiquarian and enfeebling to turn our backs on the motion, but it seems culturally suicidal to adhere to any but the most cruelly rigorous standard—always impractical and overdemanding, never reasonable. It is important to continue the dynamics of the

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past: a permanent point of tension between the accepted and the new, an insistence that a strong function of traditional taste is to keep the new from being *merely* new. To do less, to accommodate "conditions" and make allowances, is to sell the future out beforehand: to render it very large, busy, and bleak.

Some are already convinced that bleakness will be the issue. Sir Herbert Read has conjectured about the state of art twenty years hence:

> It is not a cheerful prospect for the arts, though there will be more and more artists in the sense of the word used by the entertainment industry. It will be a gay world. There will be lights everywhere except in the mind of man, and the fall of the last civilization will not be heard above the incessant din.

One is glad of a statement like that from a critic of Read's eminence; its use is as a warning, not a prophecy. There are great risks ahead for the health of art, but that is an endemic condition; these are simply new risks. The real question is: Can they be outweighed?

LET US LOOK first at the grimmer side. Immediately, there appear large general prospects that apply to all of society: the decline of the concept of individualism; the collectivist political color of the future that will come (as militarism has come) in the guise of anti-collectivism; the changes in morality, law, and theology occasioned by the chemical control of heredity, the chemical and mechanical control of mental reaction and behavior. Above all, to shatter the world we have known—collectivism or not, H-bomb or not—the age of cybernation is upon us. We have already had computer painting and poetry and music, computer translations and chess-playing, but these are only significant mockeries. Government by computer-run bureaus is not a fantasy, nor is the use of computers as full partners in scientific and other research. The changes in intellectual, familial, leisure, and work habits that are implicit in a cyberneticized age are so huge that our lives will be changed beyond our present power to imagine it. All this promises a context for culture within the next twenty or thirty years about which one can hope or despair, but not predict.

To return to the present and the performing arts, there is plenty around us right now that portends poorly for the future. The Rockefeller report lists fifty-five "permanent professional theatres" in this country as of 1964-1965. Two of them, it tells us, are *not* professional—they simply have continuity of existence. Nineteen are designated as commercial; these presumably, in the panel's view anyway, are not seriously considerable. Of the remaining thirty-four theaters, I have seen productions by eight—a large number of productions, some of which I thought passable or adequate, the majority of which I thought abysmal. Thus the list of theaters does not comfort me. There are also two lists of orchestras, major and metropolitan; Stravinsky's comments will be remembered.

But aside from one person's opinion of the theatrical productions referred to, there is a deeper reason, I think, why these theaters lack relevance to the future. The continuity and relevance of European theaters—the *Comédie Française* and two other subsidized Paris theaters, England's past Old Vic and present National Theatre and Royal Shakespeare Company, other state theaters as well—are rooted in a national drama (although, of course, they do foreign plays, too). For American drama, after one has mentioned a little late O'Neill, a little early Odets and Miller and Williams, what plays can seriously be proposed as the foundation of an important American theater? In music, what "standard repertoire" of American works could be the foundation of an American orchestral season?

Not chauvinism but genuine relevance is the point. (It will be recalled that one of Stravinsky's standards for orchestras is their ability to give first-rate performances of works by young American composers.) There is a subliminal tone in most projects for art expansion, including the present bill and report, implying that the sheer increase and support of performing groups—all devoted to unimpeachable classics—will in time make these theaters and orchestras and opera companies absolutely essential to American audiences of the second half of this century. It is a dream-picture painted, I think, in 19th-century colors, framed with images of pre-concert dinners and after-theater suppers full of genteel conversation by candlelight. Organizations that perform standard works, as Paul Goodman has observed, are living museums of music, drama, and dance, additionally important to students and as sustainers of performing traditions. That is a patently valuable function, but it is not a major creative function.

It is not America's "fault," it is historical accident that we are too young to have a substantial dramatic and musical heritage. But for that very reason, American theaters founded on an old European repertory are likely to be of less than prime immediacy here. A repertory of Shakespeare, Ibsen, Mozart, Verdi—even of Brecht and Bartok—is, in any integral cultural sense, doomed eventually to museum status. That may possibly also be true in contemporary Europe. It seems to me inevitable here.

When doubts like these are expressed, the holy word "classic" is invoked to shame us. I do not claim—and, to put it moderately, do not hope—that the best art of the past will die. But the society of the future—of the radically new future—cannot live entirely, perhaps not even mainly, on the art of the past. If meaningful creation is not forthcoming, these endowed theaters and symphony halls—safely feathered in their non-

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profit nests—may prove the exclusive haunts of culture-vultures.

The bill and the report assume that the establishment of permanent performing organizations will evoke relevant creation. Certainly, to put it negatively, it will not discourage future work. But what encouragement can we get from the recent past? The San Francisco Actor's Workshop, under Herbert Blau and Jules Irving, operated for over twelve years with a largely foreign repertory of a high level; it attracted national and international attention; and it did some new American plays. No American play of consequence has emerged from that theater. Since 1957, the Ford Foundation has subsidized thirty-one new operas—many of them American—at the New York City Center. Few believe that any work of consequence has emerged.

Perhaps, in the closely knit world of the future, the national origin of art will be of diminishing significance; the human condition may be much the same in Norway and New Mexico. But this means only that questions about future creativity apply equally to Norway as to America and vice versa, so we may as well deal with the matter at home. Is meaningful creation likely or possible in America? This resolves, quite soon, into the question of whether art, vital art, is really wanted. No art—particularly no performing art—can thrive creatively except as part of a circulatory system: it must be an organ of the social body. So again the question fundamentally is: Do we really want art? What can it mean to us?

DESPITE THE dark facts and auguries just put forth, it would be facile cynicism—not bluntness or even pessimism—to call the future thoroughly and inescapably black. Credible hopes exist: to be conjugated in terms of the perceptible near-future and in terms of the far reach of rational hypothesis. There are signs of the growth of a new, stimulated, stimulating audience for art: thus (if my belief is accurate) bringing with it an invitation to good new art and a reasonable expectation of the appearance of good new artists.

Speaking broadly, one can say that an era of cultural domination by the status-seeker may be coming to an end—at least is to be strongly challenged. Increased education, mass-produced though much of it is, is increasing the absolute number of that always small percentage of young people to whom cultivation is breath and blood. In the theater there are omens of possible advance. Howard Bay wrote recently in a letter to the New York *Times*:

> I have noticed a few items on my directing-designing-lecturing jaunts around. For instance, the theatrical young throughout the land are no more interested in Arthur Miller than they are in Owen Davis. The raw news flash is not that *Never Too Late* is old hat, but that *J.B.* and *Incident at Vichy* are filed in a faded scrapbook alongside *The Passing of the Third Floor Back*. And the Foundations are right there behind the rebels.

The recent departure of the first "best-of-Broadway" management of the Lincoln Center Repertory Theatre represented, I believe, an awareness by the board that it had taken an anachronistic step in its first appointments. The likelihood that the revolt (the right word, I think) was spurred by the theater critics of such magazines as the *New Republic* and the *New Leader* and the likelihood that the board heeded such magazines mark a significant change in audience and management attitudes. The resultant engagement of two men (Blau and Irving) who—whatever their work may prove to be in New York—made their names precisely by turning their backs on all that the first directors stood for, this, too, is of exceptional significance.

In literature it is now a critical axiom that the serious novelist today is almost always a highbrow where a generation ago (as with Hemingway and Fitzgerald) he was often a middlebrow. Twenty years ago the weekly literary supplements customarily gave grave and extensive attention to the works of Samuel Shellabarger, Ben Ames Williams, even Lloyd Douglas; equivalent attention today would be unlikely. A recent advertisement for the Literary Guild, one of our biggest merchandisers of low-to-middlebrow books, featured fourteen titles; five of them were Bellow's *Herzog*, Sartre's *The Words*, Edith Sitwell's autobiography and biographies by Zoé Oldenbourg and Elizabeth Longford. To some, this may mean that the octopus middle class is trying to strangle art and thought by making them into vogue items. To me, even if this last is true or partly true, it is still a recognition by the merchants that the appetite for vogues has been upgraded; and it is difficult to believe that no member of the Literary Guild will ever read one of the books named and be affected by it as its author intended.

The art in which a new and vital appetite can most clearly be seen is the film. The Johnson bill includes film; the Rockefeller report does not because, it says, film problems are too complex and quite different from those of the other arts. But at colleges and universities, and among other young people, there is plenty of evidence that film is the art that is most vigorously *wanted*. Its audience is so eager for good work that it leaps to overvalue much—especially if it is American—that is merely unconventional. This audience is unique among American art audiences; it enjoys popular pictures, but it wants more and better serious work than America is producing. If it is true that audience appetite evokes art, then the film may well be the art to move into the future with the most confidence. For this audience wants neither escape (predominantly) nor social status

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from film-going. It wants to live in the art it sees: to be found out by it, cornered, skewered, made both more open and more mysterious to itself. It is and can remain—if the opportunity is not twiddled away—an almost exemplary art audience.

Many of the reasons for this are intrinsic to film, and certainly some factors of freshness and contemporaneity gave it special advantages. Yet there may be advantages in age, too—particularly in a relatively new society. Writing of composers, the English musicologist Wilfrid Mellers says:

> We [Europeans] have worked from a consciousness of loss, from an awareness that the stable values that were acceptable to our forebears can no longer be acceptable to us. The American artist may . . . do the same, though he has lost much less; but the very fact that he has little sense of history, that he is *living through* his loss offers him a supreme opportunity. When the artist is alone, with no religious or social orthodoxies to guide him, his moral responsibility becomes the greater. Potentially he becomes an "unacknowledged legislator of the world."

The theater, despite the death sentence meted out by many magistrates of criticism, may prove to be deathless for a purely biological reason: the theatrical impulse seems as stubborn and unreasoning as the will to live. What is needed (as when an actor learns a part, then plays it) is for the theater man to "forget" everything he has learned at the same time that he uses it. The theater will be moribund as long as its highest ideal is to be a place for revivals of plays (particularly old and foreign ones), no matter how great they are, no matter how fine the revivals. Wallace Stevens wrote: "The poetic drama needs a terrible genius before it is anything more than a literary relic." A Broadway adage says that there is nothing wrong with the theater that a good new play can't cure. We can revise this to say that, for the future, there is nothing curable about our plays, there can only be a good new theater. The dance is much freer in America than the theater, and a number of venturesome companies have found warm partisan response, particularly in colleges around the country. The movement of *all* these arts in America is—or, I think, will and must be—toward a new context: of which the best films (mostly foreign ones at present) seem to have had some prescience.

The ancient theistic context of art—so fully, if adenoidally, explicated by T. S. Eliot—had been supplanted in this century by a context of secularism that was itself virtually religious in tone. But now that comforting secularism is changing. We know now that under our safe scientific laws there are uncertainties. Werner Heisenberg wrote: "The scientific world-view has ceased to be a scientific view in the true sense of the word." We know now that knowledge, whole and entire, will never be achieved: that it is a continuum of statistical hypotheses, not of natural laws; that its increase, instead of bringing answers, only brings questions more rapidly. The best of the art that has endured from the past 2,500 years was based on varying sets of answers. That art will probably—but only probably—continue to be meaningful to us, for moving through those centuries and bearing those beliefs was the human race that fathered us; and our quandaries are still somewhat the same, even though the expectations about them have changed. But a relevant culture of the future will have to have a perception of tense: that what is past is past. Wallace Stevens again:

> To see the gods dispelled in mid-air and dissolve like clouds is one of the great human experiences. . . . They were not forgotten because they had been a part of the glory of the earth. At the same time, no man ever uttered a petition in his heart for the restoration of those unreal shapes. There was always in every man the increasingly human self, which instead of remaining the observer, the non-participant, the delinquent, became constantly more and more all there was or so it seemed; and whether it was so or merely seemed so still left it for him to resolve life and the world in his own terms.

Many recent films seem congruent with these thoughts, both in content and in form; and I believe that this has been apprehended, consciously or not, by the audience, especially the young audience. I believe it has been a principal factor in strengthening a union.

YET, in almost crazily paradoxical contrast, there is a deadly war raging between the arts—including film—and the audience. Artists who have seen truths such as those that Stevens describes attack a society that has not yet seen them or, at least, has not yet admitted seeing them. These artists not only have no other choice; they could have, one feels, no possible other career as honest men. In the first chapter of *The Theatre of Revolt* Robert Brustein describes vividly the schism that, since Ibsen, has deepened between dramatist and society. The making of this schism was inevitable, was indeed incumbent on artists; but a prospering high culture cannot come out of such antagonism. If we fail to close the schism, to make a society of which artists can be a part, then at least one result, I believe, is that we will never have truly great creative artists again.

One does not question the function of the artist as critic; in a sense he is never anything else. But the monumental creators—Shakespeare, Dante, Rembrandt, Beethoven—were vicars of the questing life in their societies, not enemies of the society *en masse*. The artist as hater/satirist will (I hope) never fade; but Rabelais is not Swift, who is not Beckett. A future drama built entirely of Beckettian ruins and runes is, in advance, a drama of yawns. Some critics tell us that the artist's only

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possible mode at present is assault and insult. At present this may be true; as an eternal prescription, it would be as tediously bland as barley-water.

Willed affirmations are only laughable; but a willed end to deceptive nostalgia—both in the artist and society—might help: nostalgia for a life and a human character that never existed. We talk about the abysses of this century—Hiroshima and Auschwitz and Stalinist terror—as if they marked new nadirs in morality when in fact they were only mechanized augmentations of the worst of the past; and indeed the moral response of much of the world to these horrors would have been much dimmer in the past. We talk about a ghastly future of intellectual conformity as if past societies had been completely populated by vibrantly individualized intellects—even in intellectual circles! We commit the new pathetic fallacy of equating standardized shopfronts and plastic breadbaskets with standardized minds. At its best, which means both its finest and its cleverest, the human race is probably more interesting now than it has ever been; its potentialities, for good and ill, are increased in most fields. Instead of nostalgia and pathetic fallacy (sentimentalities that underlie much of what passes for rigor and acid), our society in general can hope to adopt the beneficial tension of "elitist" artistic judgment: to start from the best of the present and happily fight a losing battle against change; thus, to take the best of the present into the future.

In such a future, we may find that the "dehumanization of art," Ortega y Gasset's famous phrase, will prove an outmoded term belonging to an outmoded society. P. A. Sorokin describes our times as the end of an era of sensate art (or "human" art), the beginning of an era of the ideational and idealistic, as was medieval art: thus a kind of return to the new. The figure is stimulating because there is a possible further parallel with the Middle Ages: the future looks as if it may be centralized in temporal power and general authority, with the society beneath them made up of intensely concentrated units, self-enclosed, not because they are medievally isolated but because they can get much of what they need without venturing far. To those for whom this means a new Dark Ages, one can reply, without agreeing, that perhaps through it lies a new Renaissance.

In any event, community is what is wanted: for a culture to grow, for a society to need that culture. The burned mattresses that now hang on museum walls, the random-playing radios on the concert stage in lieu of an orchestra, the black humor and sexual savagery of our novelists, all are cries for relationship, spasms of unrequited love. And out of the complexities of an organized, if electronic, world a new community is not firmly barred from arising. The religious communities had their origins in common ignorances, in common awe—even relish—of the unexplained. It seems not impossible that a new community can rise out of a new common awe: the majesty of the explained and explainable, which gives us the confidence to live with what will remain unexplained.

If such a community is possible—huge in organization and governing principle, compressed by technology into apprehensible groups—then culture, even the expansion of culture, is possible; and the subsidies and arts councils will have helped to build a bridge to this new culture, will have provided essential holding operations while evolution took place, an evolution swift in detail, slow and painful in thesis. To such a future an artistic conservative can look with some brightness, for that new culture would not attempt (as some have asked) an integration of all of society into our present high culture. Our present culture, which did not have its origin in democratic contexts, has not shown that it can be democratized without debasement. But we are entering a new society, which will be not only post-religious but post-religious-revolt; and new values may arise from possibilities yet unimagined. For men will be there, and men are all there has ever been.

The new society may evoke a culture that, *at its very best*, is relevant to many of its citizens because it will be born out of a new world that we are all entering together. Ideational art, abstract and quickly universal, apposite to an age of universal technological principle, may replace the internal—the emotional and sensate. The concept of the individual as we know it may disappear, but history is a record of social and philosophical concepts in transition. New art forms may evolve, bringing new aesthetics and extending old ones (as the film brought a new drama and changed our view of the old one). Surely that new world may seem unattractive to many of an older generation; but the simple, paramount fact—iron yet intriguing—is that *it will be that new world in which men will live.* The shifts within it of social and political power, of daily routine, of aspirations and angers, can become invitations to a new culture to grow.

Meanwhile, change is beginning. The subsidized expansion of (mostly) older art is upon us. Largely in response to the grip of the Golden Vise, the culture of the past is going to be made to explode. If, in the long run, that explosion moves us into the future in will and mind, then we can survive the manifestations of Midcult that will certainly accompany the best results of the event, the prattle of administrators sighing with numerical joys, the mistakes and irritations. The willingness of the best men *to live in the future* will determine everything. Midwives Johnson and Rockefeller have brought us to the *accouchement.* Is it indeed a rough beast that is slouching to Washington to be born? At least we have the right to reply, "Not necessarily."

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"New York's Finest"

THOMAS R. BROOKS

WHEN, THIS PAST spring, Vincent L. Broderick took over command of New York City's Finest from Michael J. Murphy, he found on his new desk a copy of a special report of a City Council subcommittee recommending that the Council set up its own committee to review findings of the Police Department's Civilian Complaint Review Board. What happens to that report depends on pressures generated by the mayoralty contest. Civil-rights groups have demanded a review board completely independent of the Police Department to hear and investigate citizen complaints about police behavior. The Democrats, with a few exceptions, would like to stand pat but lean toward the Council subcommittee recommendations. Republican candidate John V. Lindsay has offered a compromise, proposing that the present review board of high-level civilian employees of the Police Department be enlarged by four non-police civilian members appointed by the Mayor from a panel selected by outstanding citizens.

The whole notion of a civilian review of police behavior is distasteful to the police themselves. But dissatisfaction with the conduct of New York's Finest has been simmering for several years now and—mainly because of a series of recent scandals—they will undoubtedly have to swallow some form of public review before too long. The most recent of these scandals involved Mrs. Gloria Sideratos, wrongfully arrested for possession of narcotics and forced to spend twenty days in the House of Detention for Women. Before that there was the highly publicized case of George Whitmore, Jr., who was allegedly beaten and forced to confess to the sex-slayings of Emily Hoffert and Janice Wylie. Last summer, police lieutenant Thomas R. Gilligan fatally shot a fifteen-year-old Negro schoolboy, James Powell—an act that triggered riots in Harlem and Bedford-Stuyvesant. During those riots, policemen fired thousands of rounds of ammunition into the air to quiet the crowds, which brought accusations of "excessive use of force" from civil-rights and Negro organizations. And indeed, one Negro was shot to death and many others wounded in the course of the riots. Then, in the fall, detective John C. Devlin, on a hunt for a murder suspect, shot a twenty-three-year-old Puerto Rican named Gregory Cruz three times; he turned out to be the wrong man.

In response to mounting criticism of the Police Department after last summer's riots, Commissioner Murphy put a Negro, Captain Lloyd Sealy, in charge of Harlem's 28th Precinct. (Commissioner Broderick's first major appointment was the naming of a Negro, Captain Eldridge Waith, to command Harlem's 32nd Precinct.) But whatever good this gesture did was undercut by the subsequent clearings in Police Department trials of both Gilligan and Devlin. Minority and liberal groups in New York City consequently still feel that the Police Department is either unresponsive to their needs, or is at best moving far too slowly to meet them. On the other hand, there are large numbers of citizens, perhaps larger than the numbers of the liberal bloc, who clearly feel that the Department has not been tough enough with criminals, hoodlums, and delinquents. "We're damned if we do," say the police, "and damned if we don't."

These conflicting pressures on the police make things difficult enough, but the difficulty is aggravated further by the changing mores of the city, including new—at least to the ordinary policeman—standards of authority, morality, and justice. As a lieutenant lecturing at the Police Academy on "probable cause" in making arrests put it: "Courts today have no tendency to accept our word for anything." Many of the changes taking place offend the lower-middle-class morality which generally prevails among policemen and which is of the same order as the morality Mr. Doolittle vainly inveighed against. Cops are conventional people. Only recently a patrolman was dismissed from the force because his wife won an annulment on the grounds that he refused to have relations with her; another (unmarried) was fired because he had been having sexual relations with "a woman not his wife" (also unmarried), which "tended to cause criticism detrimental to the department." Tolerance is not a police virtue: all a cop can

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swing in a milieu of marijuana smokers, interracial dates, and homosexuals is the night stick. A policeman who passed a Lower East Side art gallery filled with paintings of what appeared to be female genitalia could think of doing only one thing—step in and make an arrest. And as if all this were not confusing enough, the police must also cope with changing crime styles. "The professional second-story man," an old veteran of the force told me, "is no problem. When he's collared, he knows when to fold. But the hop-head is unpredictable. They may come along as docile as you please or they may suddenly turn on you with a knife, and you never can be sure which it is going to be."

"The nature of police work in a modern society," former Commissioner Murphy once pointed out, "has changed dramatically. It is no longer a matter of cops and robbers alone. It has become more a question of people and police, and the police have found themselves drawn into many problems, many grievances, for which they are not responsible and which they, as police, cannot solve. The police departments in all cities in this nation have found themselves confronted with and drawn into the battle for equal rights. They have found themselves in the no-man's land of the battle and the recipients of the fire of both sides. Yet, if they are to do their job properly, they must continue to remain in that position in order to carry out their sworn duties to protect the peace." Nonetheless, on that battleground, the police are plainly uncomfortable. "The only people that defend us are the Birchers," a policeman I interviewed remarked bitterly. In fairness, he might have added the *Daily News* and Mayor Wagner, who recently told a group of new recruits: "*You* are not really supposed to be human nor to have fears or frailties of your own. This is part of the responsibilities you will bear."

SHORTLY BEFORE he resigned, Commissioner Murphy gave voice to the basic complaint that all policemen are making these days. "Why," Murphy asked, "are the police regarded in some quarters as enemies and aggressors rather than friends and protectors? Why does the wave of sympathy automatically engulf the criminal rather than the policeman? . . . Why, for example, in a demonstration aimed at protesting slum conditions, does the attack suddenly switch from the slumlord to the policeman? . . . Why are we equated with some other police forces in the civil-rights struggle [*sic!*], when our methods and successful handling of such problems has been in such healthy contrast? . . . Why must we be exposed to sneers, insults and abuse when we're merely doing our duty?" At a luncheon session of the New York Chapter of the American Jewish Committee, Murphy again complained of "unfair abuse and undeserved criticism. . . . The police officer, too, belongs to a minority group—a highly visible minority group—and is also subject to stereotyping and mass attack. Yet he, like every member of every minority, is entitled to be judged as an individual and on the basis of his individual acts, and not as a group. . . . We as police object to being second-class citizens."

The police, of course, are not second-class citizens, though most New Yorkers do persist in thinking of them as uniformed Irishmen. The New York police force is the largest one in the country, numbering 25,929 (as compared with 19,000 in 1954 when Wagner began expanding it; he is now promising to add another 1,500 for the "war against crime"); or roughly one policeman for every 330 citizens. Of these, 18,100—split up among three duty tours and spread out among 80 precincts—patrol on foot or by car some 40,000 city blocks covering 6,000 street miles; 3,300 are assigned to detective units, 2,300 to traffic safety, 663 to emergency service, 546 to vice and gambling squads, 481 to the Youth Division, and 499 to communication units. The policeman works a forty-hour week (sometimes) and makes $6,647 his first year on the force and $8,098 a year after three years as a top-grade patrolman. He is young: the average age today is twenty-nine.

The force is not only changing numerically; it is also changing ethnically. The Department today, as even the greenest of recruits will tell you, is "half Irish, half Italian." Nevertheless, the Irish image persists. Richard Dougherty, who spent some time as the Deputy Commissioner in charge of public relations for the Department, explains in his perceptive novel, *The Commissioner*, that "it was a phenomenon of the strange process which constituted the making of a New York police officer that, no matter what his origins, he should, at the end of his indoctrination, become Irish."

One can get a fairly good idea of the ethnic and religious affiliations of the current force from the various police associations and societies. The Holy Name Society (Catholic) has a membership of 15,500; the St. George Society (Protestant), a membership of 4,500; the Shomrim (Jewish), 2,270; and St. Paul's Society (Eastern Orthodox), 300. Thus, over 85 per cent of the police belong to religious societies. Over two-thirds also belong to the various ethnically based societies. The Irish Emerald Society is the largest, with 8,500 members. The Italian-American Columbia Society is next, with 5,000 members. Then, in descending order, come the 1,500-member Polish Pulaski Association, the 1,320-member Negro Guardian Society, the German Steuben Society with about 1,000 members, and the 300-member Spanish-speaking Hispanic Association. Some policemen belong to more than one ethnic society. "Technically," Lieutenant James W. Wade, a Steuben Society delegate, explained, "you are supposed to have some Germanic background to belong." But Wade, who is "all West Sligo Irish" and is also a member of the Emerald Society, belongs to the Steuben

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Society because he was born and brought up in Yorkville and has an interest in the German language.

However, while the ethnic mix of the police force is changing, it is doing so slowly and lags behind changes in the city's over-all population mix. I recently spent a week at the Police Academy and I would guess that the ethnic composition of the current lot of recruits—some 750 men—is roughly proportionate to that already existing within the Police Department. There were, for example, very few Puerto Ricans and out of a gym class of some 160 men I counted only seven or eight Negroes. Such change as is taking place seems to be running in favor of Italian-Americans.

WHATEVER THE ethnic background, the job of being a policeman attracts a certain type. In general, the New York policeman belongs to the striving lower-middle classes who turn to city employment to better themselves and for the security offered. Policemen tend to have a civil-service mentality with a military cast that can be traced partly to the quasi-military organization of the Department and partly to the fact that a high percentage of the force today are veterans of World War II and Korea. Without special skills or an aptitude for the academic, these men left the services looking for a job with security and found it on the force. If the recruit is a Negro or Puerto Rican, he will probably have had more military service than a white recruit, just as he is likely to have been born of parents on a somewhat lower economic level (the mother still at work in the needle trades and the father an odd-job-man or semi-skilled factory hand). A white recruit's parents are likely to be somewhat higher on the social scale—fathers, say, who are butchers and mothers who may be office workers, librarians, or just housewives. A recruit must be twenty-one, a high-school graduate possessing 20-30 vision, and be at least 5'8" tall. He must also pass a qualifying exam (the average recruit IQ is about 104-108) and survive a fairly extensive character investigation. As is the case with the American young, the recruit will have held a fair number of jobs—generally of a low order of skill and a high order of insecurity—before settling down as a policeman. Since he is likely to be married and already a father, the job security offered by police work is doubly attractive.

Police work is not intrinsically pleasant, although it can be fascinating. H. L. Mencken caught the flavor many years ago, and this much of police work has never really changed: "I knew cops," Mencken wrote in *Newspaper Days*, "who were really first-rate policemen, and loved their trade as tenderly as so many artists or movie actors. They were badly paid, but they carried on their dismal work with unflagging diligence, and loved a long, hard chase almost as much as they loved a quick, brisk clubbing. Their one salient failing, taking them as a class, was their belief that any person who had been arrested, even on mere suspicion, was unquestionably and *ipso facto* guilty." But, as Mencken went on to acknowledge, "this theory was grounded, after all, on nothing worse than professional pride and esprit de corps." Still, police work does not attract the imaginative or the sensitive, and any sensibilities a rookie may have are quickly rasped off by the coarseness that surrounds him on the beat. "We don't get the happy drunks," a patrolman told me, "or the quiet ones, just the mean ones." Drug addiction may be romantic to some, but for the cop it is a sour smell, watery eyes, a vacant stare, the writhing agony of withdrawal, or even a corpse with the needle and syringe still dangling from an ulcerated arm.

Police work, perhaps because much of it is also routine, frustrating, and possibly boring, makes for quick tempers. This may be one explanation for the outbursts of senseless brutality that do occur. Another is what might be called cross-cultural conflict. A Negro drifter not long ago was arrested for breaking into a liquor store and swiping a bottle. He smashed the neck, took a swig, and was caught with the goods, so to speak, inside him. Two policemen carted him off to the station house for booking. He was a moderately difficult prisoner, swaying around as they tried to fingerprint him. But he had joshed them into a good mood and all three were making something of a joke about the fingerprinting. The Negro then shoved a bit, saying "C'mon you m————r f——ers." The cops immediately turned upon him and beat him up. The word he had used is not a word to which lower-middle-class Irishmen or Italians take kindly—even in jest, and especially from a Negro (although that particular epithet is a commonplace of lower-class Negro speech).

Apart from that, the Negro was a drifter and therefore doubly vulnerable. And because the people involved are almost always similarly vulnerable in one way or another, brutality cases are hard to come by. A Negro lad was caught in a sidewalk crap game and roughed up. "The others ran and got away; I stayed and didn't, so the cops got sore," he said later. When he is feeling tall and civil-rights conscious, he talks of pressing charges. But then he has second thoughts. There is his living to consider: he makes it selling marijuana. He considers neither gambling nor selling marijuana morally wrong, but he knows the law can be tough on both counts. The upshot is that he does not press charges.

So far as the police are concerned, drug addicts, homosexuals, derelicts, and (occasionally) off-beat citizens are fair game. So, too, are the poor, who suffer not so much from police attention as they do from a lack of police protection. Our streets are patrolled in the interests of the middle and upper classes who do not wish to be annoyed by panhandlers, pimps, or prostitutes (the rich make

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these latter arrangements by phone), or robbed by pickpockets or hold-up men. And just as the well-dressed drunk is an object of police consideration while the poorly dressed one—black or white—is merely an object, the better-dressed neighborhood gets better police protection than the slum. In the slums, the police follow a policy of containment: crime is to be confined to the slum so as not to spill over into adjacent neighborhoods, but it must also be prevented from touching the outsider who comes to the slum for color and/or excitement.

In fairness, however, it must be said that there seems to be a rough understanding between the police and the derelict population. I happened to be in court one morning when a round-up of derelicts came up on charges of loitering and disorderly conduct. It was the nightly take of the drifters who had wandered off the reservation centered on the Bowery—a kind of invited arrest, as it turned out. The judge quickly asked who wanted in. A goodly number raised their hands; he gave them thirty-day workhouse sentences, and the rest got suspended sentences. The decision was up to them and apparently was made on the basis of whether a particular individual wanted to clean up and recuperate or would rather return immediately to the flophouses. On the other hand, the bum who strays too far away from mutually acceptable territory does so at his own risk. For example, the panhandler who invades the theater district as the crowds spill out into the streets is inviting trouble. He will probably be banged up against the side of a squad car, pushed into the backseat, taken over to Ninth Avenue, and dumped.

The police have developed an ideology about drugs. "Addicts are about the dirtiest people going; sellers are scum." The policeman who roughs up an addict-pusher and tells him to "stay off my beat" is unlikely to have a complaint lodged against him; even if the addict did complain, no one would believe him. Homosexuals and prostitutes are also easy marks. The bane of homosexual existence, as of the whore's, is the "decoy," the plainclothesman pretending to be on the prowl for sex.* For the streetwalker, a "pros" charge may mean no more than a quick trip to night court, a guilty plea, and a sixty-day suspended sentence (or perhaps—occupational hazard—a turn in the Women's House of Detention). But homosexuals frequently run the risk of a beating as well as a jail sentence. In one instance, a homosexual was solicited by a man who invited him up to his hotel room. As it turned out, the room was maintained by the vice squad for staging arrests. Once there, the homosexual was thoroughly beaten by the soliciting plainclothesman and his partner. They had not been intending to arrest him, but "they beat him so bad," the man's lawyer said, "that they had to arrest him." He was carried out of the hotel in a stretcher down the back stairs and booked for disorderly conduct, resisting arrest, and felonious assault. The charges were lodged to justify the use of "necessary force" in making the arrest.

"Necessary force" covers a wide range of police sins; "resisting arrest" provides the excuse for indulgence. But since criminals *do* resist arrest and carry weapons, it is impossible to measure "necessary force" in advance. "The law," a police officer who knows what it is to shoot a man explained to me, "neither commands nor commends the shooting of a felon but declares that it will hold such killing a justifiable homicide." The best training policemen get is in the use of firearms, and like all men who live with guns, they develop an attachment, a mystique. Commissioner Murphy, the evening he resigned from the force, was quoted by Jimmy Breslin in the *Herald Tribune* as saying, "I'll keep this [his gun], I'd feel undressed without the thing. When you get up in the morning it's like putting on your tie." (The new commissioner, according to the papers, will not carry a gun.)

POLICEMEN ARE "on duty" twenty-four hours a day and are required to carry their guns at all times. Both notions seem good examples of cultural lag. As a perceptive police captain said to me, "The men now get time-and-a-half for overtime which kind of destroys the idea that a cop is on duty all the time, doesn't it?" We were walking along Third Avenue where cars were illegally parked. "Besides, you don't see me ticketing those cars, do you?" Moreover, the Police Department's legal staff is not at all sure about the legal standing of an off-duty policeman who lives outside the city, as more and more members of the force now do. Is he on duty when he sees a crime being committed in Nassau county or not? All citizens, of course, have the right to make an arrest when they *see* a crime being committed, but a policeman enjoys certain immunities. Unlike the private citizen, for example, he cannot be sued for false arrest should he be in error, so long as he has probable cause. And this is not the only anomaly in the off-duty-on-duty life of the policeman. On duty, the policeman is not allowed to drink; even a lunchtime beer could mean disciplinary action. Yet if he has been drinking when off duty and is then called to active duty a little the worse for relaxing, he faces summary dismissal from the force. In addition, if a brawl should start in the bar, he is automatically back on duty even though his judgment may be slightly impaired. Off-duty policemen cutting loose with a gun at such moments are not unknown.

*Every policeman puts in about a year as a plainclothesman shortly after his probationary period of nine months on the force. The usual plainclothes assignment is the vice squad, and the reason the assignment is made so early in a cop's career is that a new man has not yet set into that peculiar mold which makes policemen easy to recognize.

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Every policeman lives with the thought that some day he may have to use his gun, though cops on the beat use them far less frequently than one would think from reading the papers. One patrolman said when interviewed that he had drawn his gun "maybe five times" in ten years on the force and had never fired it except on the range. Should the moment come, however, he, like every other policeman, prays he will be in the right; and should he make a mistake, he wants to be backed up. This feeling runs deep, and explains why the Department consistently clears men brought up on charges in shooting cases. Policemen *know* that outsiders would not excuse them in shootings that are clearly errors of judgment, if not exercises in brutality, and therefore they are unalterably opposed to any kind of civilian, non-departmental review board. "Civilians don't understand."

Another one of the things "civilians don't understand" is arrests. There are some 200,000 arrests a year, but the police are constantly asked why, with all the crime on the streets—drug addicts, pickpockets, prostitutes—and with all the armed robbery, mugging, and murder that go on, more arrests are not made. One answer is coverage. "We're a vertical city, don't forget, and the cop is down on the street." The average radio car covers a seven-mile sector; the average patrolman walks a five-block beat, both sides of the street. In twenty-five "high-hazard" precincts, foot patrolmen may operate in pairs. (For historical perspective consider: in Hell's Kitchen during the 1860's, police patrolled in sixes.) But the fact is that the cop pounding the pavement—eight hours a day with an hour off for lunch—is not expected "so much to make arrests as he is to inform, unless of course he *sees* a crime being committed." Thus a Department spokesman. The patrolman essentially is a keeper of the peace: "It's strictly a case of being available." Each day before he goes on tour —be it on the 8 to 4, 4 to 12, 12 to 8—he checks a bulletin board in the station house for "post conditions," the active spots on his beat where he may find anything from kids bent on "malicious mischief" to their elders in pursuit of a bet, drugs, or a woman. Any sign of suspicious activity is reported back to precinct headquarters and either vice-squad plainclothesmen or detectives are dispatched to pursue the matter.

"In the old days," I was told, "if you shot and killed a man, automatically you made detective. But nowadays we require a consistently good record and intelligence." Still, the old ways die hard and the detective is generally a patrolman who once made "an outstanding arrest" or who has developed special skills. Being a detective is the "glamor work" of the force and pays anywhere from $8,431 to $10,801 a year.

Detectives are a shrewd, tough lot, though now a somewhat disgruntled one. "Every time we make an arrest and get a confession," one complained to me, "someone hollers that his civil rights are being violated. I couldn't care less if I never made another arrest." The first time I visited a squad room—a big, open place on the second floor of the precinct station house with a half-dozen desks and a scattering of chairs—the walls struck me as rather grimy. The station house was new and the rest of it was spotless. At first I thought the "broom"—a patrolman with seniority who wants to get away from the rigors of street patrol—had not yet managed to get upstairs to do his work. But the walls of the squad room were grimy in another brand-new precinct house too, and I realized that the dirt came from prisoners being shoved up against the wall in the process of interrogation. Detectives are as eager for confessions as judges are for guilty pleas: like guilty pleas, confessions are a way of clearing the docket quickly with the fewest complications. Prosecutors estimate that 75-80 per cent of convictions in major cases like murder and rape are based on confessions or other inculpatory statements. To be admitted in evidence, confessions must be voluntary, but since judges tend to overlook claims that confessions were coerced, the temptation to use a little pressure is virtually irresistible, especially if the newspapers or headquarters are pushing for results. Supreme Court Justice Arthur J. Goldberg may condemn, in *Escobedo* v. *Illinois*, such a system "as less reliable and more subject to abuses than a system which depends on extrinsic evidence independently secured through skilful investigation." But the police are not impressed.

THE LAW STATES that a person must be arraigned at the earliest possible moment. Until recently, however, it was a widespread practice not to book a suspect until the detectives were through with him. Emmanuel H. Lavine, in his 1930's exposé of police brutality, *The Third Degree*, reports one instance where a strangling suspect was quizzed for ninety-six hours without interruption. George Whitmore, Jr. was questioned for twenty-six, a little over a year ago. While immediate arraignment is required and generally obtained nowadays, a prisoner cannot be arraigned in a felony case at night court (from arraignment on, a prisoner is almost guaranteed a lawyer). Consequently, a clever detective will not pick his man up until late afternoon: "That way, we get him overnight at least."

Lavine gives many examples of how detectives in his day got a suspect "to come clean." "Taps," for example, called for tying up the prisoner in an armchair so that he wouldn't fall off while being struck repeatedly at 30-second intervals with a piece of rubber hose or rubber tire. The red welts thus raised would fade quickly, leaving no outward signs of beating, though the affected area would remain sore for some time. Few suspects could hold out against such treatment. But detectives, like the rest of the world, have by now caught up with Freud; the third degree today is more likely

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to be psychological than physical. "My buddy's pretty tough," one detective will say, pointing to the biggest bruiser in the squad room, "and he's short tempered. So why not be reasonable? We wouldn't want to upset him, would we?" And so it goes. Whitmore says that he was given the "light-heavy" treatment. After his alleged beating, a second detective took over, detective Joseph Di Prima, a fatherly man who testified at court hearings to determine whether Whitmore's confession had been voluntary. "The boy told me that I was nicer to him than his father ever was." The other detective in the case did not make the same claim.

Some policemen deny that they use brutality or contend that they use it only in isolated cases. Others, however, are truculent: "Whaddya expect? Kid gloves for these punks?" No policeman, however, will admit to administering a beating, for to do so would mean automatic dismissal from the force. Former Commissioner Murphy has pointed out that, with a quarter of a million arrests last year, less than 200 complaints of police misbehavior were made—and this despite the fact that it is now easier for people to lodge complaints (which may be made in person, by telephone, or by letter, to a newspaper or community group as well as to headquarters). The New York Civil Liberties Union, which recently began a program offering aid to citizens with complaints against the police, so far has only a bare handful of cases. Each complaint received, according to Murphy, is investigated and reviewed by the members of the Department's Civilian Complaint Board, which consists of three civilian deputy commissioners: Leonard E. Reisman (in charge of legal matters), Edward J. McCabe (in charge of licenses), and Joseph Martin (in charge of community relations). The Board determines whether the police officer involved should be brought up on departmental charges and tried or not. "Disciplinary action," says a Department spokesman, "is taken in about 10 per cent of the cases we receive."

ACTUALLY, even when a citizen has a good case against the police, it is extraordinarily difficult to get satisfaction. For one thing, for a complaining citizen to find and then penetrate Police Headquarters at 240 Centre Street is a somewhat discouraging business. Headquarters— a great Gothic pile located amidst a host of small machine and power tool wholesale outlets somewhere south of 14th Street and north of Canal—must be one of the least known public buildings in the city. The citizen fortunate enough to locate the building then must brave forbidding signs—"All Visitors Stop and State Business"; "Show Identification by Authority of Police Commissioner"—and a gruff uniformed desk man who blocks the way into a wildly rococo marbled and wrought-ironed lobby and stairwell. If this much can be survived, the complaint may be on its way. But the complainant had better be ready to follow up. Rochelle Horowitz, executive secretary of the Workers Defense League, warns that "a Complaint Board investigation can take up to five or six weeks and you've got to press the charges to get results." All this, of course, takes time, or a lawyer—neither of which is readily available to those who need them most.

Last February, Charles Allen, a soft-spoken, thin actor who wears his hair long for his part in a successful children's play, started across Broadway at 47th Street on his way to Actors Equity. He was hobbling a little from a recent ski accident. As he stepped off the curb, a car cutting the corner sharply brushed against his good leg. Allen drew back, and one of the men in the car hollered, ". . . you dirty c————————r." Allen cried out, "What did you say?" The driver slammed on his brakes, repeated himself, and jumped out. He shoved Allen, calling him a "f———ing cripple" in the process. Allen pushed the open door of the car against the driver as he stepped back in the automobile. At the urging of various members of the crowd that had gathered, Allen took out a notebook and jotted down the number of the car license plate. The car stopped again. This time when the driver got out, he identified himself as a police officer, saying, "Come along with us." At the insistence of several people in the crowd, Allen was allowed to take down the names and addresses of witnesses before being hauled to the police station. According to Allen, the detective told him on the way in, "I had to arrest you once you took down my number." Several of the curbside witnesses followed Allen and the detectives over to the station, where everyone was allowed to make a statement.

The police side of the case is summed up in the charges lodged against Allen: simple assault for putting his fist through the car window and punching the officer in the face, causing a crowd to collect while resisting arrest, and using loud, boisterous, and obscene language after arrest. Allen's trial was set for March 10, nearly a month later. It was postponed to April 28, then to May 18, then to May 19. Each delay made it more difficult for Allen to round up his witnesses, some of whom had already dropped away because every court appearance meant the loss of at least half a day. Finally, the assistant district attorney dropped the case on his own motion, in return for Allen's commitment "to hold harmless the people and the police officer." Ron Gould of the New York Civil Liberties Union and Allen's attorney, says that Allen would have been convicted of disorderly conduct if two of his witnesses had not stuck to the end. All in all, it is not surprising to find that the number of complaints of police malpractice in New York is low, whether filed with the Police Department or with other agencies.

No one really knows, not even the police themselves, how prevalent police brutality actually is,

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just as no one knows how extensive corruption is. Payoffs for all sorts of "services" do take place, as in the case of a contractor who slips a "few bucks" to the local police to avoid being snowed under by parking and littering summonses. But such payoffs have become so traditional that the "victims" have a hard time recalling when the precise "shakedown" occurred. Brutality, of course, is something else again. Harold Rothwax, a very able Legal Aid Society attorney, has the impression, based on at least a passing familiarity with many of the 72,000 cases handled by Legal Aid last year, that "the actual use of physical force [by the police] is less frequent now than five years ago, and, according to the old-timers around the office, even less so than twenty years ago." Patrolmen on the beat are less quick to use the stick than in the past. Nor is it as easy as it once was for the patrolman on the beat to take someone into a dark doorway and rough him up. In areas like Harlem, the police are hesitant to do so for fear of starting a riot and of being jumped in turn. (It is apparently also the custom in Harlem for persons being arrested to kick up enough fuss to draw public attention, yet not enough to provoke the cops into retaliation.) Patrol car policemen, because of their mobility, perhaps enjoy more opportunity to administer a drubbing. But even so, in these days of civil-rights consciousness, it is not unusual for a passing citizen, on seeing a man picked up by a patrol car, to drop around to the station house to make sure that nothing has happened en route.

Moreover, under pressure from civil-rights organizations, the Police Department has cracked down. New York's Finest are under orders to behave themselves. Immediately after last summer's riots, the Department set out on a special effort to teach officers restraint and to inform them about the civil-rights struggle through a weekly training program. Every time James Farmer of CORE or Roy Wilkins of the NAACP went on television, all members of the force were told to try and catch the program. The Commissioner also made a special broadcast to his men, telling them that "We must strive *NOT* to instill fear, but to continue to earn respect and confidence. . . . There are some who believe that a rough manner is a sign of strength which brings swift obedience. They are wrong. . . . There is no need for such behavior by any policeman. . . . Those who have this incorrect attitude must change it and change it now."

IT IS DOUBTFUL that the hammering away at the need for "courtesy, tact, sympathy, understanding, dignity, and a temperate attitude" worked any overnight miracles. There is considerable underlying resentment in the force against Negroes and Puerto Ricans. I sat through an hour free-for-all discussion at the Police Academy between a recruit class and Joseph Maniscalco of the city's Human Rights Commission. The recruits made no bones about their feeling that Maniscalco said what he did because "it's in his book" and because "he's getting paid to say that." The recruits believed all the stereotypes common to their class and background. "Property depreciates when the colored move in." "We have this supposed great welfare state, we give 'em, Puerto Ricans and Negroes, money, this an' that, but it doesn't seem to do any good." "It seems like a waste of money, we're building new slums for them, that's all." "How can a place get filthy, unless you put filth in it?" And so on and on and on. A four-hour course on race relations for the recruits and periodic refreshers through unit training for all the men on the force cannot cope with this sort of thing.

What, then, can? Orders, for one thing. Sometimes, of course, like all soldiers, the police take pleasure in ignoring orders, but on balance discipline does prevail. The experience of the 24th Precinct (which embraces over 135,000 people, 50,000 of whom speak Spanish, and which is bounded by 86th and 110th Streets and Central Park and the Hudson River on Manhattan's Upper West Side) over the past year illustrates what can happen when the proper orders are handed out and enforced. Two years ago, two Puerto Ricans were shot by a policeman in the precinct. Reacting to neighborhood bitterness, the 24th Precinct, in conjunction with the Goddard Riverside Community Center and the Board of Education, launched "Operation Friend." A community-relations board was set up to meet regularly with the Spanish-speaking people in the area and special programs were started, aimed at recruiting Puerto Rican youths for the force. Most of the 250 men assigned to the precinct attended off-time classes in the Spanish language and Puerto Rican culture, and eleven of them were sent to Puerto Rico last March. Fifteen children from Puerto Rico were then brought here this summer to live for two weeks with policemen and their families. The Department also assigned Captain Stephan J. Valle, who is of Spanish descent, to command the district. The results of all this have apparently been good enough for Gilberto Gerena Valentin, who is president of the National Association for Puerto Rican Civil Rights and a bitter critic of the police, to comment: "If all precincts with heavy Puerto Rican populations adopted the program of the 24th, there would be a big improvement in the situation."

Obviously, much can be done by the Department to improve relations with the city's minority groups, but just as obviously little will be done unless enough political pressure for improved police policies is built up. It is the need to generate this sort of political pressure that perhaps explains the drive for an independent civilian public review board. As a practical matter, however, it is doubtful that the city will get a review board that would work, nor is it at all certain

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that such a board would answer the needs of the poor requiring redress from police abuse. For a review board to function really effectively, it must be impartial; it must possess the power to influence police policy either through punishment meted out to individual offending officers or through exposure of malpractices; it must be able to advance policy suggestions that will be taken seriously; and it must open neighborhood offices throughout the city where citizens may file complaints and be heard with sympathy. But to get a board that meets all these criteria would take more political power than the civil-rights groups can at the moment command within the city.

Councilman Paul O'Dwyer has introduced a bill in the City Council to create a New York City Director of Citizen Redress. This idea seems more to the point than a civilian review board of police behavior, yet O'Dwyer's bill, which has the backing of the New York Civil Liberties Union, otherwise languishes for lack of support. Patterned after Sweden's *Ombudsman,* the bill would empower the Director of Citizen Redress to "receive complaints by any person in regard to the conduct of any agency or any officer or employee thereof" and "to investigate the conduct and affairs of any agency and the official conduct of any officer or employee thereof." The Director would have power to examine papers of any agency and to subpoena witnesses to appear before him. His principal weapon in curbing oppressive or unreasonable conduct by city agencies would be publicity or the threat of public exposure. He would be selected by the Mayor from a list of five names submitted by the chancellors and the presidents of all the universities in the city of New York, would hold office for six years, and could not be removed except upon proof of official misconduct. He would, therefore, be truly impartial. Since he would hear complaints about *all* city agencies, the poor—and, for that matter, all citizens—would have someone to turn to with grievances against officials who affect their lives as much if not more than the police.

Still, the police have much to answer for in the clearing of officers who, if nothing else, demonstrated serious lack of judgment in their handling of such suspects as Gregory Cruz and George Whitmore, Jr. As A. Philip Randolph has pointed out, police opposition to proposals for a civilian review board is based on a dangerous notion indeed—that the police are above civilian review altogether. "They are not—and, in a democracy, never can be—an autonomous, self-enclosed and self-regulating agency," Randolph said. For this reason we need, I believe, a review by an independent body of representative citizens of all police practices, including the "war on crime." After all, the very statistics the police use to frighten us into making larger budget appropriations for fighting crime—$267 million in 1964 (90 per cent for salaries and pensions)—are suspect in the eyes of some sociologists. There has been no intensive civilian examination of police conduct since the Seabury investigations of city government in the 1930's. The time has clearly come for another look.

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RONALD SANDERS

SETTLING IN ISRAEL?

"YOU NEVER get over this terrible ambivalence," she said. "You can't stop yearning for America, and then when you go there on a visit, you can't wait till you get back here. For the rest of your life, you're both an Israeli and an American."

The young woman was answering a question that I had asked, but her remarks were addressed mainly to another man in the room, and to his wife. They were on a brief trip to Israel, trying to find out if they wanted to settle there permanently.

"That doesn't matter to me," the man replied. "I've never felt at home in any part of America outside of New York, anyway. If I can't live in New York, I might as well admit I can't live in America. And I can't stand New York anymore."

"When there's not indifference, there's violence," his wife went on. "That's New York today. After a while you get sick of the purposelessness of it all, of the lack of caring. Everybody's so neurotic over there. For a change, we'd like to live in a place where people believe in themselves and have something to work for."

"And are willing," her husband added, "to put up with a little hardship for the sake of what they believe in."

"Oh, all that's not what it used to be," the host broke in. He and his wife, also Americans, had been sitting silently, almost indulgently, through most of the conversation. "Most Israelis aren't *halutzim* anymore. They've had it. Now they're beginning to want the same kind of comforts the Americans have."

"When we first came here in '49," the hostess said, "we lived in one room and kept our milk cool under the bed. We were as poor as beggars, like everyone else here in those days, and we were happy. Now we have four rooms with a terrace, a refrigerator, a car, and we're just like any of our friends here or in America. I suppose we should go help populate the Negev or something, but now we have three children, and besides, I guess we're getting a bit too old for that sort of thing."

It should be pointed out that the great majority of those who go to settle in Israel do not make their decision to do so in this atmosphere of leisurely and careful reflection so characteristic of the American emigrant. I had occasion to discover this fact at first hand when I sailed to Haifa from Marseilles as one of a small number of "tourist" passengers on a ship that was carrying several hundred immigrants. Many of my fellow passengers were bearded North African patriarchs in long robes, who walked slowly about the decks in their slippers or squatted silently all day, staring out in bewilderment at the passing ocean. Their grandchildren, who dressed in the European style and were usually quite adept at dancing the twist, were at least jubilant about the revolutionary change that was taking place in their lives, although no less overwhelmed by it. One pleasant, round-faced boy of about seventeen would try his best to look casual whenever he asked me if we had almost arrived, which was about four or five times a day. "Yes," I would answer in French, "*la terre promise*—we're almost there." "*Grâce à Dieu,*" he would reply, smiling broadly and wagging his head comically, so as to minimize his embarrassment at his own show of piety by adding a touch of mockery to it. The Eastern Europeans on board, even the young ones, were less ebullient. They told grim stories of the long years they had had to wait for exit visas, and of how they had usually been compelled to leave behind everything they owned in order to be permitted to go. I remember one girl who had been to a university for a while and who often asked me during the voyage if I thought it would be possible for her to resume her studies in Israel; one afternoon, I found her in a corridor, crying bitterly. I asked her what was wrong, and she told me that the immigration authorities (who were on board and at work during the entire trip) had just reassigned her family to different living quarters in Israel than the ones they had originally been promised. After a while I was able to learn from her that the new apartment had the same number of rooms as the old one, and was, in fact, in the same building. But it was no use trying to reassure her that the change was only a small matter; she had already suffered too much in her life under the arbitrary rulings of bureaucracy.

RONALD SANDERS is currently working on a book about Israel, which is to be published by Harper & Row. His essay, "The Legacy of A. D. Gordon" appeared in our April issue.

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Some will say that this comparison is not fair, but it is, in fact, one that comes to the minds of many guilt-ridden Americans when they contemplate the relatively privileged atmosphere within which they make their own choices. American decision-making about *aliyah*—settlement in Israel—is usually a leisured affair. In this, as in many other matters, the average American enjoys a far greater freedom than does his equivalent in other parts of the world, a benefit which he often finds is to his disadvantage in some respects. As is well known in Israel, American *aliyah* has always been vacillating and indecisive. In the decade preceding the outbreak of the First World War, the period of the first intensive wave of Jewish settlement in Palestine (and when, incidentally, the Zionist Federation in America could already claim a membership of more than six thousand), a total of four settlers from America established themselves there, so far as is known.* This showing was vastly improved upon during the time of the Mandate, when some 12,000 settlers arrived from America, although more than 3,500 returned within the same period. At the beginning of 1948, in other words, there were some eight to nine thousand American settlers in a Palestinian Jewish community of about 650,000. Since statehood, the Jewish population of Israel has more than trebled in size, while the American community there has about doubled.

To many Americans, Jewish or Gentile, it may seem remarkable that the figure is as high as it is: that as many as sixteen thousand of their compatriots, often well above the average in talent, have chosen to make their homes in a remote country whose standard of living is so far below that of the United States. To many Israelis and Zionist leaders, on the other hand, it is shocking that such a tiny proportion of the largest Jewish community in the world have chosen to recognize the Jewish state as their homeland. There is no doubt that a Zionist feeling of sorts is really quite strong within the American Jewish community; and on the level of fund-raising, and of well-wishing toward the state of Israel, it manifests itself brilliantly. But it is only a small few among American Jews who ever penetrate into the area of feeling where it becomes a moral obligation for them at least to consider personal settlement in Israel. Within this minority are the members of Zionist youth groups for whom such a state of mind—though most of them outgrow it—is an obligatory phase of late adolescence. Others arrive at it out of a crisis of individual soul-searching, often from a background that has had very little to do either with Zionism or Jewish institutional life. In neither case, however, is there usually even a trace of the kind of external necessity that governs the decisions of North African and Eastern European Jews to emigrate to Israel. The choice for Americans is entirely subjective in origin, and must usually be formulated in the face of the skepticism of friends and family in the United States, who often wonder why one would even be considering such a move.

The very act of emigration is usually performed by the American in the same atmosphere of uncertainty. Typically, the American settler first arrives in Israel either as a tourist or as a student, thus sparing him the need to formulate, even to himself, an explicit interest in the prospect of settling there; he can look around in freedom, and allow the interest to arise spontaneously, if it exists at all. Many of those who approach the matter in this way buy their return tickets at the very moment when their protestation of love for Israel is at its most impassioned; they say they shall return for a longer stay, and some of them do. On the next trip, the returning American may take a job, find a place to live, and change his status to that of permanent resident. But even at this point, the mood of tentativeness is seldom really dispelled; his return trips to the United States will probably still feel like more than mere visits to the Old Country. Somewhere out of the constant round-trip cycle between Haifa and New York, a small permanent core of American settlers in Israel continues to accumulate, but it is the rare ones among them who ever renounce their American citizenship.

Having arrived in Israel on a ship full of immigrants, I was at first inclined during my stay to be a bit scornful of this American luxury of indecisiveness. Since I told myself that I had no interest whatever in settling there, I was conveniently exempt from my own disapproval—my own choice in such a matter, I was sure, would be made swiftly and firmly. It was therefore something of an awakening for me to discover my own dismayed reaction the first time I met someone who had acted in just such a way. It happened in a kibbutz which, though not very far south of Tel Aviv, had an air of great remoteness to me because it was situated at a point where the greenness of the north begins to fade off definitively into desert. I am easily susceptible to a mood of exoticism, and so it came as a surprise to discover there a young man who was from Brooklyn, like myself, and who had, in fact, grown up in a neighborhood not far from that of my own childhood. He was one of the men in charge of the dairy, and he took me there one evening to show off the brand-new milking machines. As we made the rounds, he spoke to the cows and patted them on the head like pet dogs, addressing each of them by name. I recognized a familiar impulse in this, for I had worked on farms during several summers while in school, and had, I confess, been quite sentimental about cows in much the same way. I entertained myself with the idea

* P. E. Lapide, *A Century of U.S. Aliyah*, Jerusalem, 1961, p. 57. All figures in this article are from this book.

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that there is something in the heart of a Brooklynite which senses a kinship with these hulking, but gentle and lugubrious creatures. In any case, the sentiment is not that of someone born and bred a farmer.

Afterward, we went to his room, which would have given an impression of utter austerity but for the hi-fi player and the large collection of records that took up one corner. Next to it was a bookcase filled with works on agriculture and an occasional Modern Library classic. He told me of his plans to make his life in that kibbutz, and showed me pictures of the girl, also from Brooklyn, whom he would marry in a few months, he said, as soon as he had completed his military service. I looked up in surprise. He explained to me that he was serving at the time in *Nahal,* a branch of the Israeli army which assigned personnel to man agricultural settlements in sensitive border areas (that particular kibbutz was not far from the Gaza Strip). But there had also been another reason for my surprise.

"If you're in the army," I asked, "doesn't that mean you've given up your American citizenship?" I made the error of not putting the question casually enough.

"Yes," he replied, slightly embarrassed by my reaction. There was a long pause which I thought I might try to fill by saying how much I admired the firmness of his decision, but I was having trouble summoning up the words. Then he went on to talk about his family situation: his mother had died a few years before; his father, left with him and one other, younger, son, had done everything he could to get him to change his mind, including an offer to pay all his son's expenses if he would study law. "But if I'd have done that," he said, "I would have been just like any other guy. Instead, I went to the agricultural college at Farmingdale. It wasn't so much my wanting to be a farmer that bothered my father—it was just that he knew it meant I had made up my mind to come here, and he was right. I collected my diploma, and in two weeks I was on the boat."

I spent the rest of my visit assuring him that I thought he had done an admirable thing, both in order to make up for my earlier indiscretion and to try to convince myself that it was how I really felt. At the end of the evening, as I got up to leave, I paused to admire his record collection.

"It's my one American-style luxury," he said. "We all have something like that, I guess."

"Don't worry," I said, "you've come a long way from Flatbush Avenue."

"I sure have," he answered.

It was this encounter that taught me the true nature of my own feelings about emigration to Israel. I could never have acted as precipitously as he had; at heart, I was as much a vacillator as the greater part of my American compatriots. Since the search for truth often becomes most passionate at the moment when self-justification proves to be its goal, I now found myself asking more often and with a greater sense of urgency, why so many Americans are this way. If they have arrived at the feeling that Israel represents a permanent and central ideal in their lives, why do they then linger in hesitation for so long, either about going to live there, or, once having gone, about making a final decision to stay for good?

Many Israelis have ready a simple answer to this question: most American Jews, they say, are spoiled children, irretrievably addicted to the middle-class comforts they enjoy in the United States. "They come here, these little boys and girls," an Israeli student once told me, speaking of her American colleagues at the Hebrew University, "get fat allowances from their fathers and live in nice, well-heated rooms. They go around together to all the places Israeli students can't afford, talk about how Israelis aren't Zionist enough, and go rushing off at the end of the year to tell everybody back home how disappointed they are in it all." And as for an older generation of American tourists, they are generally regarded, not only in Israel but throughout the world, as having an excessive passion for comforts. Europeans and Israelis alike tend to see American civilization as morally weakened by affluence and self-indulgence.

THE IRONY is that many Americans see themselves in the same way. Indeed, to a certain type of serious-minded young American, one of the attractions of Israel is precisely that it seems to offer an alternative to his own overly comfortable way of life. While his parents may have known too much enforced austerity in their youth to derive any pleasure from it, for him an essay in self-privation can seem to be an essential test in the continuing validation of his soul. Now, Israel is a country that was founded upon austerity as one of its fundamental ideals, and precisely in the era when rapidly spreading affluence was beginning to challenge the moral constitution of the Western countries. Though there is no denying that affluence and the appetite for comfort are beginning to make inroads into Israeli life also, they have not yet done so sufficiently to diminish Israel's attraction for many young Americans, as well as Europeans, who feel within themselves a passion for austerity. They go there to try themselves out, as it were, the American in his way, the Western European in his. Sometimes, though it is not articulated, there is even a spirit of competition in the air as the two groups vie with each other in the quest for moral satisfaction.

It is a competition in which the American is doomed either to lose or to gain no recognition for his victories; in the eyes of both the European and the Israeli, and sometimes even in his own, he simply has too much to live down. Once, on a street in Jerusalem, when a heavy February rain suddenly came beating down from nowhere, I found myself taking shelter under the same tree as

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a girl who turned out to be a student from England. She had just arrived in Israel on her second visit, the first having taken place in the summertime, a season when Jerusalem usually seems to the visitor, in climatic as well as spiritual terms, like the meeting-point between earth and paradise. She was naturally surprised at the present turn of the weather, and as we stood there shivering for some ten minutes or so, I described to her some of the unique discomforts of a Jerusalem winter. I told her nothing that the majority of Jerusalemites, native and otherwise, do not agree upon, but when I sought to illustrate one point through a personal experience of mild, but distinct, suffering (I was perhaps over-coloring the story a little at that moment), she turned to me and said: "But, of course you're not used to that—in America you have central heating." The remark, which came from that ancestral British pride at being able to see the vapor of one's breath in the living-room for some six months out of every year, was delivered with ill-concealed contempt. It brought the conversation quickly to an end, and when the rain stopped, we walked off in opposite directions. (Only then did I discover that I had been standing in a spot where the rebound from the top of a low wall had caused the seat of my pants to become soaked. This was what I had suffered for her sake, but she would never know it.)

The American in Israel is thus engaged in a constant battle with the specter of central heating; but frequently an even greater handicap in the struggle is his own excessive earnestness. The Western European, for example, is far more skilled than he is at dabbling in austerity. Israel today is swarming with young Europeans for whom the country's chief appeal is that it adds the pursuit of "roughing-it" to their roster of international pastimes; the southern port city of Eilat, for instance, is the headquarters of an ever-changing but permanent colony of European beachcombers. Americans rarely end up this way in Israel; having made the long trip there, they are determined either to enjoy their tour in comfort, or to take up a far less frivolous engagement with the country. For them—and it is a source of misunderstanding with both the Europeans and the Israelis in the country—renunciation is a serious matter, not some form of sport. During my stay in Israel in the spring of 1964—to take one illustration—there was a three-week-long postal slowdown which brought mail deliveries virtually to a halt. The strike became the chief subject of conversation during that time, but while most of the Israelis I spoke to would express an attitude of bemused resignation about the whole thing, punctuated with knowing remarks about a kind of charming *schlamperei* that continues to prevail in the Israeli public services, the Americans were usually quite incensed. At least partly, to be sure, their reaction could have been due to concern at being cut off from news of their families abroad, yet as it happened, incoming foreign mail tended in general to get through, and it was internal communication that was far more severely affected, since there are not very many telephones in Israel. The Israelis, in other words, were suffering from the difficulty just as much as the Americans and other foreign residents were, so the source of their opposing attitudes was cultural, not practical. The Americans, to whom the prompt and regular delivery of mail seems to be, like the flow of water from their taps, a virtually unassailable human right, were incredulous and outraged that such a thing could happen in the middle of the 20th century. The moral value of suffering was no excuse for inefficiency. Many of the Israelis, on the other hand, were enjoying this mild revival of the hardships of earlier and less complicated days. They seemed to be more certain than the Americans that the situation would not last forever.

MOST PEOPLE cannot live in a state of permanent renunciation when necessity does not impose it upon them, nor, indeed, is there any reason why they should. The majority of Americans who remain in Israel therefore end up by striking a balance between the relative luxury they knew back home and the zeal for renunciation which accompanied their original arrival in Israel. They achieve their final resolutions, characteristically, on the basis of a practical morality. They find, for example, that it makes sense for physical, as well as moral, reasons to live on a diet less rich and complicated than what they had been used to in America. Again, it becomes perfectly reasonable to seek more modest entertainments than they had once sought, to rely on the less expensive but more gratifying diversions provided by the relaxed social life of a city like Jerusalem. Americans, for instance, are among the first to regret that television is about to come to Israel; and they tend to prefer Jerusalem to Tel Aviv, because of the former's greater natural beauty and simplicity of character. But inconveniences like no hot running water, or no central heating, come in time to seem not morally uplifting at all, but quite the opposite; they represent impositions upon the freedom one had known previously to perform tasks more creative than puttering about with heaters and kerosene stoves. There is, after all, nothing particularly edifying from a moral standpoint about chasing down the street after the man on his mule-driven kerosene wagon, carrying a rusted and squeaking three-gallon barrel in your hand. And to whatever extent you may be prepared to derive satisfaction from the experience of shivering over dinner, or of getting up in the morning and placing your bare feet upon an icy stone tile floor, you may undergo a change of heart the day you find your children's lips looking blue. In the end, the children would probably adjust to the situation better than their parents could, but the inclination to place their

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children on trial has never been very strong among American Jewish parents. In the face of these irritants, most American families end up living in the apartments, still relatively few, that have hot water and central heating; since these tend to be located in the more chic and expensive parts of town, the reputation that Americans have of being coddled is thereby reinforced. Of course, Israelis are often just as zealous in the pursuit of such comforts but it is the Americans who are the first to be noticed at it and it is they who become the focus of disapproval.

Such problems, like almost all the problems that cause the mood of indecisiveness from which most Americans suffer in Israel, are the result of a surfeit of freedom in their lives. Extreme freedom is one of the major sources of the spiritual troubles of middle-class life today in the Western world in general, but its effects are perhaps especially acute upon Americans, among whom affluence is more widespread and who have come upon it more suddenly. One way of dealing with this problem of freedom has often been to seek a radical change in the nature of one's life, to find a means of putting severe limits upon the otherwise unbridled personal will. Such deliberate self-restriction has been the main source of strength, for example, of many of the mass movements of modern times. In Israel, the kibbutz has offered this sort of solution to many people. This is not to say that the kibbutznik is not a free man—indeed, he regards himself as more free than most—but the condition of his freedom is the imposition of a high degree of personal self-control, founded upon a concrete and, to most outsiders, overbearing set of obligations to the kibbutz community. A considerable number of Americans have undertaken to make this kind of fundamental transformation in the character of their lives.

There are seventeen "American" kibbutzim in Israel, so-called either because a nucleus of Americans were among the original founders of the kibbutz, or because such a nucleus joined with the kibbutz shortly after its foundation, thereby giving it a largely American character. About two thousand Americans (not including their Israel-born children), or roughly 2½ per cent of the kibbutz population of Israel, are members of these settlements. Their influence in the kibbutz movement, however, is far greater than their relatively small numbers would suggest. The highly developed community spirit that prevails among them is best expressed by Murray Weingarten, a member of the "American" kibbutz Gesher Haziv, who writes:

> We live in a kibbutz by choice, not from compulsion. Since I am a native American, Israel does not represent an escape from an "intolerable" way of life—the United States is far from being an unbearable place to live in. I have faith in American political and social development, and I have no fears about my ability to take my place in American society. It is because I find kibbutz life in Israel to be a challenging, interesting, and personally satisfying experience that I live there, not because I have negative attitudes towards America or American Jewish life.*

But these are only a small portion of the American community in Israel; the great majority of Americans who go there to live are seeking, not the kind of radical transformation in their lives that joining a kibbutz would demand, but simply a more stable and more spiritually satisfying version of the life they had been living in America. They go into the same professions they would have followed in America, working primarily as educators, social workers, scientists, engineers, and technicians of various sorts, and they live in suburban communities similar to those in which their counterparts live back in the United States. By living in this way, without really seeking to impose any basic modifications upon their freedom, they continue to face the problems that freedom produces. The moral clarity of Murray Weingarten's conception of his decision to live in Israel is not readily available to those Americans who set out to live more conventional middle-class lives there. Their conception of the choice they have made continues to be modified, for example, by considerations of career. The vexing fact remains that the United States, of course, presents a far richer store of career opportunities than Israel does, and even many native Israelis are susceptible to the pull of American job prospects. As a result, even a large number of the Americans who regard themselves as permanently settled in Israel remain ready to accept good career openings if they should arise in the United States. Some of them, to begin with, are only in Israel on assignments with American or international Jewish institutions, and though these may be of a more or less permanent character, the continuing connection with America plays a very large role in their lives. In these circles, the borderline between permanently living in one place or another is not at all clearly defined. There are even a number of regular "commuters" among them who shuttle back and forth between the United States and Israel in much the same way that American Senators and Congressmen do between Washington and their home states or constituencies. In short, the tiny state of Israel sometimes proves to be too constricting a container for many members of the restless middle classes of the 1960's.

"YOU'RE RIGHT. I would have thought twice about settling here, about giving up my old life back home, just like you. But a man named Adolf Hitler helped me to make my decision." The admission was of a sort that is not frequently made

* Murray Weingarten (Moshe Kerem), *Life in a Kibbutz*, Jerusalem, 1959, p. 8.

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in Israel, and it was all the more impressive for being made in a kibbutz dining-hall by one of the veteran members of the settlement. The fact is that outside provocation has had a much greater influence upon the entire history of *aliyah* than is usually conceded in discussions, and not only with respect to refugees from Nazism, or the various other forms of despotism that exist today. Even the classic pioneer generations, who founded the modern Palestinian Jewish community in the period just before and after the First World War, were as much influenced by external conditions as by subjective ideals in making their decisions to emigrate. Political and economic conditions were especially harsh around that time, and anti-Semitism even more virulent than usual; but above all, that generation had spent their entire lives in a Jewish environment that was still, even after centuries of habitation on Russian and Polish soil, rigorously cut off from the culture that surrounded it. Their decision to emigrate was, in part, a decision to reject a life that had become morally as well as materially intolerable. It was founded upon an experience profoundly different from the Jewish experience in America today.

There is only one major group of European settlers in Israel who have known something like the American Jewish experience of full integration into the culture of their native land, and who therefore understand the strong attachment to their country of origin that most American Jews feel. These are the Israelis of German origin, or, at any rate, those among them who are old enough to remember a day when the sense of being equally a German and a Jew was perfectly reconcilable with the lives they were then leading. In that epoch, they, too, would have hesitated at the prospect of making their lives anywhere but in Germany. Those were the days when German was the virtual *lingua franca* of learned Jewish discourse throughout the world, much as English is today. The eventual outcome of that apparently perfect marriage between German and Jewish culture seemed at that time inconceivable; why, then, the German Jews in Israel usually ask today, should the Jews of America imagine that their destiny will be any different?

This was the question that usually led to the most vexing discussions I took part in during my stay in Israel. Being a teacher of history, and sharing in some of the pedantic spirit of that profession, I usually responded to this question with a long discourse on the comparative sociological factors governing the lives of German Jewry prior to Hitler, and of American Jewry today. I sought to demonstrate that, though anti-Semitism is certainly still to be found in America, the present situation of the Jews in America is nevertheless far superior to the situation that existed in Germany, and is, indeed, unique in the entire history of the Diaspora. This argument fared well against those who tried to meet it on its own positivistic terms. But there were some who knew that the strength of their assertions did not lie in this kind of rational demonstration. They knew a simpler and more overwhelming truth, which had been demonstrated to them by the power of experience: that is, when one is a Jew living in *galut*, any disaster is possible. Such a position cannot be defended by rational argument, but, so stated, it is absolutely correct. History has proven it to be so.

But it was, after all, disaster itself, and not mere knowledge of its possible eventuality, that drove the Jews from Germany in the end. How many men can allow their lives to be governed by remote possibilities? The vehemence with which many of the German-born Israelis claim that such a disaster must be regarded as imminent for American Jews, is itself a sign of the intensity of the regret with which they finally tore themselves up from the world in which they were born, when there was no longer any other choice. Indeed, they might still be drawn to that world if it still existed anywhere else but in their hearts. To this day, the life-style of the German-born Israeli tends to be patterned upon that of a Central Europe which is in reality gone forever. The *yekke*, as he is popularly and somewhat tauntingly called in Israel, is a dignified reminder of old Frankfurt, Berlin, or Vienna, soberly making his way through a world dominated, both from the top and from the bottom of the social scale, by less decorous breeds of Jews from Eastern Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East. He is, in fact, in a kind of diaspora. It is in this respect, too, that he strongly resembles the American, from whom he differs in so many other ways. But, unlike him, the American has some place to which he can return.

"IF THEY only spoke English here as their national language I wouldn't hesitate to settle down for good." This is the common protest of Americans despairing over the agonies of learning a language in which one must be an advanced student to be able to do so much as pronounce a newspaper headline, much less understand it. The special difficulties of learning Hebrew only add to the reticence about speaking languages other than their own for which English-speaking people are notorious. (This, incidentally, is as true of Englishmen as it is of Americans, contrary to a self-effacing belief that many Americans hold.) When the Anglo-Saxon hears someone speaking a foreign language, it is hard for him to suppress a certain deep-seated incredulity that the speaker could be doing anything but translating thoughts that were originally formulated in English. Many British and American travelers in foreign countries seem instinctively certain that their queries will be understood by the bewildered policeman, if only they ask them loudly enough. Jews, on the other hand, have traditionally been celebrated for their

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linguistic versatility (a product of misfortune as much as of talent), but in this respect, as in many others, the American-born Jew is thoroughly acculturated to his native land; he is usually no better at speaking foreign languages than any other American. In Israel, the natives of English-speaking countries are known as *anglo-saxim,* a fact which evokes its share of ironic comment from the British or American Jews so designated. But if ethnocentricity is the criterion and linguistic inflexibility the index, then no more appropriate label could have been devised for them, with all its ironies.

Actually, the English language enjoys a very special status in Israel. It is true that certain sectors of Israeli public life, most notably the postal services, still use signs which encourage the hopes of visiting Frenchmen that their language might officially rank second in the country after Hebrew; but, for the most part, even French writers on Israel have given up such Gallic transliterations as *chalom* in favor of the standard English spelling of the word. Over the doors of most institutions, both public and private, the Hebrew title is followed by an English version, and if a foreign language is spoken inside, it is most likely to be English. Today, now that spoken Hebrew is an accomplished historic fact, many Israeli parents are as eager to have their children learn to speak English as they once were to have them know Hebrew—for English is not only an important tool for personal advancement in Israel, it is also, by common consent, the country's chief medium of contact with the broader culture of the West.

This situation is, of course, a marvelous convenience for the English-speaking tourist, and on the face of it seems to offer great advantages for the English-speaking resident as well—so that he is very much tempted, even after many years in the country, not to take the trouble of learning Hebrew properly, or even of learning it at all. His social life will not even be drastically limited as a result to a circle made up exclusively of *anglo-saxim;* it can also include the many cultured Israelis who are both accomplished in English and eager to have a chance to practice it. Indeed, many *anglo-saxim* find a convenient excuse for their deficiency in Hebrew in the observation that their Israeli friends seem to want only to practice English with them all the time, which is frequently even true. To further compound the pampering of the English-speaking person, is the fact that, in many parts of Israel, a rich cultural life is available in English. It is the language of one of the best daily newspapers in the country. In a city like Jerusalem, most bookstores carry books and magazines in English, and some stores have more material in English than in Hebrew. There are lectures in English to be heard there virtually every week, and the cinemas are dominated by American films.

The flaw in this convenient way of life, though not always directly evident, is nevertheless deep-lying and serious. For, in the end, the person who does not know Hebrew well is cut off from Israeli society at large; and if he is English-speaking, his cultural insularity gives added exclusiveness to an upper-class status that is bound up with familiarity with the English language. For in Israel, as in many other parts of the world today, English is the language of money and power; ordinary working-people are more likely to be intimidated by it than to have any knowledge of it. When the late Robert Frost visited Israel a few years ago, he commented that it ought to become the fifty-first state of the Union, especially since everyone there seemed to know English so well. With his usual insight, the poet was articulating the dream of many an American when he said this. But the illusion of the universality of English in Israel can be sustained only by remaining within a certain elite circle, as a distinguished American visitor on a brief tour is likely to do. If the American Jewish *resident* does not get outside of this circle, it is a far more serious matter. His life in Israel—not unlike that of the older generation of German Jews—can be compared to a certain traditional conception of the diaspora Jew. He lacks roots in the soil, as it were. To be sure, the working classes of Israel are, on the whole, no more native-born than he is; but the characteristic that they have in common with each other but do not share with him is, precisely, that they are "immigrants," and he is not. Americans arrive in tourist cabins, not on immigrant ships, a difference that is brought home with great force whenever an American ignores the language which, for the ordinary Israeli immigrant, is the very medium of his self-improvement.

It is, in fact, precisely the nightmare of the immigrant experience that is the major source of American cultural reticence in Israel. Only one or two generations away from the humiliations of being an immigrant himself, the American Jew is utterly unwilling to repeat the experience of his fathers. He simply will not submit himself unequivocally to a language in which he is a tongue-tied foreigner. Horrified at the thought that his children might come to regard him as some kind of "greenhorn" in the same way as he perhaps regarded his own parents or grandparents, he rigorously maintains the supremacy of English in his household. This is not always perfectly successful, however; in some homes, the children, though they understand the English that is spoken to them, will answer only in Hebrew—a grim reminder to their parents of a childhood in America when they had used only English to reply to the Yiddish of their elders.

Most of the problems that Americans face in Israel would be far less troublesome, for others as well as for themselves, if only they did not live

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in an unenviable limelight, which seems to show up their faults far more readily than their achievements. This is the price that Americans pay wherever they go in the world for having been born in a country that is notorious for its unparalleled wealth and power. They are rarely given the benefit of the doubt; it is up to each of them, when he is somewhere abroad, to prove that he is not what is now everywhere referred to as an "ugly American." In Israel, the fact that he might be Jewish makes him no less American in the eyes of the Israeli population, and the same burden of proof lies upon him. The fact is, of course, that Israel is full of Americans who are quietly making contributions to the progress of the country. But for every American holding a professorship at the Hebrew University, there are also several others hanging about the cafés of downtown Jerusalem, searching for their souls in leisured ostentation, and it is these latter who will get the most attention. The American girl doing occupational therapy in an Israeli hospital will not leave nearly so vivid an impression upon the memory as the woman muscling her way to a store-counter in Tel Aviv, loudly making her demands in New York-accented English. In every case, the well-intentioned American must overcome widespread suspicion that he may turn out to be one of the latter type, so that his soul-searching becomes even more ponderous and embarrassing to himself than it might otherwise be. Problems of this sort are, perhaps annoyingly, nothing like those suffered by the immigrant masses who pour into the country needing to be provided with the necessities of life; but they are problems nonetheless, and not without considerable difficulties attached to them merely because they are relatively privileged in character.

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ISAAC BASHEVIS SINGER

TWO CORPSES GO DANCING

A Story

IT HAS ALWAYS tickled my fancy to amuse myself not only with the living but with the dead as well. That I do not have the power of resurrection is a well-known fact. This is something only the Almighty can accomplish. Nevertheless, I, the Evil One, can for a short time infuse a corpse with the breath of life, with animal spirits as the philosophers choose to call it, and send it to roam among the living. Woe unto such a one! one who is neither alive nor dead, but who exists somewhere on the borderline. What a delight it is for me to look in on a corpse as, wholly unaware of its status, it eats, worries about making a living, marries, sins—deceiving itself and others. When the game becomes boring, I end it. "Back to your sepulcher, Mr. Corpse," I order, "enough of your tricks." And the corpse crumbles like dust, for while it has been carousing, it has kept on rotting all the same.

This time I chose a young man named Itche-Godl. He had been dead more than a year and his widow, Tryna-Rytza, had remarried. Since he had lived in such a large city as Warsaw, had left behind no parents, no children, and certainly no estate, he had been completely forgotten. The truth of the matter is that he had been a corpse even when alive. You know the old saying: "A poor man is like a dead man." Well, Itche-Godl had been a pauper of the first magnitude. His wife had been the breadwinner, selling in the market place, and the couple had made their home in a cellar that was dark even during daylight hours. Itche-Godl, in tatters, had moped about the study-houses, or dozed on a bench behind the oven. A puny man, stooped, sleepy-eyed, with a beard like the wattle of a chicken, he wore trousers that drooped constantly, a ragged gaberdine girdled with a rope, an old caplining on his head, and on his feet cracked shoes. So he had existed until his thirty-sixth year, when he fell prey to some mysterious illness. For several weeks he lay under a covering of rags in the rotting straw of his bench-bed, with his face turning always yellower and more haggard. Until finally one morning while Tryna-Rytza was preparing her wicker basket to take to the market place, she realized her provider, her lord and master whose footstool she would one day become in Paradise, was no longer alive. Taking a pillow feather, she held it to his nostrils and waited to see if it would flutter. But it did not. Somehow or other, she managed to scrape together a few gulden for the funeral, and Itche-Godl was dispatched to the True World. Since the burial took place on a Friday, the neighbors were too busy to walk behind the hearse, and the body was hurriedly disposed of. Not even a marker was placed over the grave.

Usually after a man dies, the Angel Dumah confronts him, demands his name, and then proceeds to weigh up his good against his evil deeds. But Itche-Godl lay rotting for months without anyone coming to question him, forgotten not only by the angels but by the devils as well. It was only by accident that I learned of this forsaken cadaver, and then it occurred to me why not have some fun with it.

"Listen here, Itche-Godl," I shouted at him, "what's the use of rotting underground? Why not get up and go into the city? There are plenty of corpses roaming around Warsaw. There might as well be another."

Itche-Godl rose, and since it was very late and the sexton fast asleep, I sent him to the mortuary where he stole the night watchman's trousers, boots, hat, and gaberdine. Then he set off walking toward the city.

Although he was dressed like any other pauper, there was something about him that was frightening. Dogs howled. The night watch shuddered and clutched their sticks when they saw him silently approaching. A drunk, staggering across his path, sobered instantly and dropped back. Since Itche-Godl did not know that he was dead and that he had not been home in over a year, he was now on his way to his cellar. Coming into the narrow street where he lived, he felt his way sightlessly down the cellar steps, hanging on to the narrow wooden rail.

"How late it is! My, my! Why did I stay so long at the study-house?" he mumbled. "Tryna-Rytza will surely make mincemeat out of me."

He pushed at the door but to his astonishment found it fastened by a lock and chain. She must be in a rage, he thought. He rapped once, then again. Suddenly he heard what sounded like a man's sigh from the other side. What's going

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on here? he asked himself. Is it possible Tryna-Rytza has fallen upon sinful ways? But that's foolish. I must have imagined it. . . . At that moment the door was flung open, and in the darkness Itche-Godl made out the figure of a man. It occurred to him that perhaps he had made a mistake and knocked on the wrong door. "Does Tryna-Rytza live here?" he blurted out.

"Who are you?" rasped a coarse male voice. "What do you want?"

"But I am her husband," said Itche-Godl, confused.

"Her husband?" the other bellowed, backing away.

"Who is it?" Tryna-Rytza called, getting up from her bed. Presently she too was at the door. Itche-Godl recognized her familiar shape, her stride, the sweet-sour odor of her body.

"It's me, Itche-Godl," he said.

Instead of replying, Tryna-Rytza began to scream. The man slammed the door. Itche-Godl was shut outside. He trembled. Tryna-Rytza let out shriek after shriek. Then came a sudden silence, as if she had fallen into a swoon. A little later, he heard whispers, murmurs, and then Tryna-Rytza and the man began to intone "Hear, O Israel."

"What goes on here?" Itche-Godl inquired of himself. Rooted there in the darkness, he pondered, scratched his beard, furrowed his brow, but the longer he thought about it, the more astounding did the entire incident appear.

"No doubt about it, the woman has committed adultery," he told himself.

Though it grieved him sorely to leave his woman and his pallet and to seek shelter for the night in the poorhouse, what choice had he? It was not his way to argue and he had never even learned how to raise his voice properly. He decided to withdraw.

"What can I do?" he thought. "It has been destined so."

And on shaky legs he climbed back up the stairs and out into the city.

AT DAYBREAK as Itche-Godl lay huddled on the floor in a corner of the poorhouse, believing himself asleep, I appeared before him in black, with the feet of a goose. "Why dream, Itche-Godl?" I said. "Man does not live forever. If you don't get your portion in this world, in the next it will be too late. If your wife is an adulteress, you must become a lecher!"

"But that is forbidden," Itche-Godl answered. "One is punished for that in hell."

"There is no such place as hell," I informed him. "A corpse knows nothing and feels nothing. There is no judge and no judgment."

"But how could I, ragged and scabby as I am, become a libertine?" asked Itche-Godl.

"The rich have plenty of money," I said. "Go to the market and steal some. I'll help you."

"And suppose they catch me and throw me into prison?"

"Don't worry. They won't be able to do a thing to you."

Early that same morning, Itche-Godl went to the market place and walked into a store as if to make a purchase. But although there were no other customers, the proprietress did not approach him, nor, when he ambled over to a sack of beans and dipped his hand in, did she berate him for handling her merchandise. Presently, when the woman went into the back room leaving the store unattended, Itche-Godl sidled over to the counter, opened the cash-drawer, took out a handful of money, and stuffed it into his pocket. Then he slipped outside, and lost himself in the crowd.

Barely a minute later, he heard the hue and cry. The shopwoman wailed that she had been robbed, and a great commotion ensued. Everyone was suspicious of everyone else. A beggar was stopped, searched, and, although nothing was found on him, severely beaten. But no one suspected Itche-Godl.

"What do I do now?" he asked.

"Aren't you at all hungry?"

"Yes and no."

"Well, never mind, go to a soup kitchen and order a plate of tripe with calves' feet, egg noodles, a bowl of carrots and fried potatoes, and a glass of brandy to wash it all down. As you leave, take a decent fur coat and a sable hat from a hook. After that, we'll see."

Since Itche-Godl was not listed in the Book of Life, the angels were unaware of his existence, and it was easy for me to bend him to my will. He followed my instructions and an hour later emerged on the street again, a well-dressed man. His face, to be sure, was pale and sunken, and his eyes looked congealed in bony sockets, but the fur collar concealed nearly his whole visage. Since he appeared prosperous, the beggars pestered him for alms, but he, like any man of property, pretended not to see them.

"What shall I do now?" Itche-Godl asked me again.

"Would you care for a little sport with that harlot, your wife?" I asked him.

"Yes, why not?"

"Come along then, and do as I tell you. I'll see to it that all goes well."

I steered Itche-Godl to the market place where Tryna-Rytza was standing over a basket of half-rotten apples. In contrast to Itche-Godl, she was a healthy wench with red cheeks and broad hips. As Itche-Godl was convinced that it was only yesterday she had deserted him, he could not fathom the changes he saw in her. Her face appeared more youthful, her voice lustier, as she conversed with the other marketwomen, at the same time eating with gusto some fried groats from an earthen pot.

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"Apparently sin agrees with her," thought Itche-Godl. It was I, of course, who caused him to think this, his mind being completely under my domination.

He went nearer. "Excuse me, woman, how much are the apples?"

Tryna-Rytza looked up and, bewildered at seeing such a distinguished man in a fur coat and sable hat, blurted out: "A penny a pound. Three pounds for two."

"Too cheap!" said Itche-Godl. "In Danzig where I come from, such produce would bring at least three pennies a pound."

"Huh . . . what? That is a price!" Tryna-Rytza exclaimed, staring in amazement at the stranger. "Here, everything is dirt cheap."

"Why do you work in the market?" he asked. "Don't you have a husband to support you?"

"I have a husband, may he live to a hundred and twenty," she replied. "But I have to help out."

"What does he do?" Itche-Godl asked, laughing to himself. He was certain that she was speaking of him, Itche-Godl.

"You might say he's a jack of all trades—porter, second-hand clothes dealer, sometimes a barrel-maker, sometimes a cobbler. But you know the saying: 'Trades aplenty, pockets empty!' "

"Do you have children?" he asked. She said she did not. "And why not?" he asked slyly.

"I'm with my second husband," Tryna-Rytza explained. "My first, may he rest in peace, was, begging your pardon, a weakling and a simpleton. He died a year ago. My second, may God spare him, has only been with me a few weeks."

Itche-Godl strained to keep from laughter. How could the woman lie so shamelessly?

"Tell me the truth. Which one do you love best: the second, or the first, blessed be his memory?"

"Why do you ask me such questions?" she demanded. "People from Danzig must be terribly curious."

"In Danzig, when one is asked a question, it's the custom to answer it," he said, marveling at his daring. It seemed, he decided, that with money one acquired a goodly measure of impudence. Tryna-Rytza also seemed lost in thought as she swallowed the last spoonful of groats.

"Well, what's the use of lying to you?" she replied, after some hesitation. "May God forgive me, but this one is a man. The other, may his rest be easy, was, alas, a shlemiel."

Suddenly she looked closely at the man in front of her. Her blood grew cold, her face paled, and the earthen pot fell from her hands and shattered into bits.

"Who are you? What do you want?" she screamed in a voice unlike her own. Before Itche-Godl could manage an answer, she had fainted. The tradeswomen cried out and scurried about. Itche-Godl edged away into the crowd.

AT THE market place of the Old City stood a large drygoods store belonging to a widow named Finkle. Widely known for her wisdom and education, she spoke both Polish and German, and her witticisms and *bons mots* were repeated and relished among the merchants. The widow Finkle was olive-skinned and slim, with sharp eyes and an aquiline nose. She wore a curled wig topped by a silver comb, shoes with high heels, and, even on weekdays, silk dresses and jewelry. She had her clothes custom-made for her by a tailor who sewed for the nobility.

She had been a widow for over twenty years, but had never remarried. The reason? That was her secret. No one dared to ask. Her late husband, Reb Joseph Rappaport, had been heir to a fortune, a Talmud scholar, and learned in worldly matters as well. Obviously she could not forget him. It was rumored, too, that she had come to her husband on his death-bed, and of her own volition made a vow never to remarry.

This widow, Finkle Rappaport, fell ill one winter with an internal ailment, and the most prominent Warsaw doctors were unable to help her. In Vienna at that time lived a doctor said to have performed miracles, literally bringing the dead to life again. So the widow Finkle traveled to Vienna, leaving the store in the care of her three clerks, a young man and two girls, all relatives upon whose trustworthiness she could rely.

When months passed without word from her, rumors began to circulate that she was no longer alive. Before her departure she had drawn up a will, leaving part of her estate to her relatives, the remainder to charity. Her costly gowns and silk undergarments were, in case of her death, to be distributed among indigent brides. And a sum of money was set aside to engage ten pious men to say kaddish and to study the Mishnah for a full year after her demise. She had also provided that an eternal light in her memory be maintained in the prayer house. In short, the woman had attended to it that she should not arrive empty-handed at the Celestial Council of Justice.

But in the meantime, no one knew what had happened to her, and the Warsaw rabbis forbade that her estate be touched until there was definite proof of her death. Nine months passed. That the widow Finkle was no longer alive was clear to everyone, since in all that time nothing had been heard from her. Her near relatives had already mourned for her, and when her name came up, the usual eulogies were intoned. Several women had dreamed that she appeared before them in shrouds, pleading that her remains be returned to Warsaw so that she might be buried next to her ancestors, and complaining that her soul could find no place in the impious cemetery of Vienna.

Suddenly the news spread that Finkle had returned. One evening, as her employees were about to light the oil lamp, Finkle entered. She

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was swathed all in black and her form appeared taller and more angular than it had been. The clerks were so frightened they were unable to speak.

"Apparently, you decided you were already rid of me," Finkle said.

"God forbid," replied the male clerk, recovering himself.

"Why didn't Aunt write?" asked the older of the girls, bursting into tears.

"If I didn't write, obviously I was unable to write!" Finkle snapped in her severe manner.

She related tersely that she had been confined in a Vienna hospital, had been extremely ill, but was now recovered. It was clear that she was not disposed to discuss her absence. She seemed a changed person, her face drawn and spotted, her nose more crooked, her eyes sharper yet somehow more distant. In the days that followed she sat behind the counter gazing into a volume of *The Lamp of Life,* although, as the younger of the girls observed, she never turned the page and the book remained open always at the same place. Women kept coming in to see her, to question her, but she received them coldly and unresponsively. She answered everyone in the same way, saying only that she had been very sick. And when the young matrons interrogated her about Vienna, how the women dressed, what the latest fashions were, and whether the city was truly as magnificent as some descriptions would have it, she simply reiterated: "I hardly saw the city. My mind was on other things."

Finkle was sitting in the store one day staring into *The Lamp of Life,* the yardstick on one side of her, the shears on the other, when Itche-Godl came in to purchase material for an overcoat, as I had ordered him. Getting into a conversation with Finkle, he told her that he was a merchant from Danzig, a widower.

"Is it long since your wife passed away?" Finkle asked. And Itche-Godl told her how long it had been.

"What are you doing in Warsaw?" she asked. And he explained his plans to erect a building on the market place four stories high and with three court yards.

"Why such a large building?" Finkle asked.

"One does not build for oneself alone but for posterity as well," he replied.

"You have children, then?" asked Finkle.

"My first wife, may she rest in peace, was barren," he answered. "But I am thinking of marrying again."

Finkle asked him how many yards of cloth he required.

"What's the difference?" he answered. "So long as it covers the body." And he looked at her with lackluster eyes, and she looked back, the depths of her eyes blank.

The next morning, I bade Itche-Godl send a matchmaker to Finkle. "But how can I?" he protested. "I have a wife already." "Do as I tell you," I ordered. "You have nothing." So the marriage broker spoke to Finkle, and she consented. When the clerks and neighbors heard that Finkle was contemplating marriage, they were greatly surprised. They came to offer congratulations, but were thanked curtly. When they inquired: "Who is the groom? Where is he from? What does he do?" she said sharply: "Who knows? He's erecting a building or something in the market place."

"But there isn't an empty lot there," they pointed out.

"For my part, he can build on the wind," Finkle answered. But although her mouth smiled, her eyes remained stark. Moreover, the women noticed, when they were near her, a weird odor that seemed to emanate from her person. Mostly they stayed at a distance, however, for Finkle always reapplied herself quickly to her volume with its yellowed pages. The women, leaving the store, whispered among themselves. "Somehow it's not the old Finkle," they said and departed with heavy hearts.

THE CLERKS in the store assumed that Finkle's wedding trousseau would be a costly one, but she ordered no new garments sewn. At home, too, her maid observed that she was behaving strangely. She barely touched the food placed before her, never attended to personal needs, washed herself, or changed her clothing. In the morning her bed appeared unslept in, never disarranged, as smooth and cold as the day before. When she walked through the house, her footsteps made no sound, and often, when the maid spoke to her, there was no reply. The wedding date was set, yet Finkle made no preparations. One time the maid asked her: "Where will the master sleep?"

"What master?" Finkle answered.

"I mean . . . after the wedding," stammered the maid.

Finkle shrugged. "He'll sleep in the same place as the first."

On the evening of the wedding, Finkle appeared at the ritual bath, and the women, who had not counted on her coming, were greatly astonished. She looked, in her black clothes, unusually fleshless and elongated, nor did her figure cast any shadow on the wall. The bath attendant came to help her undress, but Finkle pushed past her, and sitting down on the edge of the bench began to remove her clothes herself. Her torn stockings and spotted undergarments surprised everyone. When she was naked, she descended the steps promptly, and silently lowered herself into the water. Her body was wasted, one could count every rib. Though she remained underwater for a long time, not even one bubble rose to the surface. Finally she poked her skull out, a skull that was neither trimmed nor shaved as is customary among pious women, but was

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overgrown with clumps of dishevelled hair.

The next night was the night of the wedding, and the bride, having dressed herself in a black silk dress with a train, stationed herself at a window to wait for the groom. Her girls had filled the candelabras and chandeliers with lighted wax candles. Itche-Godl hastened in, accompanied by an assistant rabbi and by some street loungers who were to make up the *minyan*. The ceremony went off in the usual way. The marriage contract was filled in by the assistant rabbi with a goose quill. Itche-Godl slipped the ring from his bosom pocket and placed it on Finkle's index finger. When the canopy had been dismantled and the poles stacked behind the oven, the maid served cakes and brandy to the guests, while they tendered their congratulations to the bride and groom. When the assistant rabbi said to Finkle: "May we soon celebrate a circumcision!" she snickered, revealing a row of blackish teeth, while Itche-Godl, lowering his head, giggled.

"A good night! A lucky night!" chorused the guests as they left.

The servant girl, who had been given the night off, had gone to sleep at her mother's, and the clerks had retired to their quarters in the basement. Finkle and Itche-Godl were left to themselves.

"Shall I put out the lights?" asked Finkle.

"As you wish," said Itche-Godl.

"You're mournful. Why?" asked Finkle.

"You're imagining it," answered Itche-Godl.

"Would you prefer to eat or sleep?" whispered Finkle.

"Sleep," said Itche-Godl.

"I, too." Finkle sighed.

She began to walk toward the bedroom, and Itche-Godl trailed behind, his legs shaky. The corridor was dark.

"How's your house coming?" Finkle asked.

"The lot—it's already there," replied Itche-Godl in an undertone.

"The lots are always there," said Finkle sternly. Itche-Godl suddenly felt as if she were moving far away from him. "Where are you going?" he called. "Come on. Don't be afraid," she replied.

The bedroom was not only unaccountably wide and dark, but it didn't seem to have any walls and a wind seemed to be blowing as if they were outdoors. "Get undressed," Finkle ordered.

"I'm cold," complained Itche-Godl. He was stumbling around in the dark looking for a chair where he could sit down and take off his shoes.

"What are you doing? Where are you?" called Finkle.

"Are you in bed already?" asked Itche-Godl and Finkle murmured, "I think so."

"I can't find a chair . . . ," said Itche-Godl.

"Truly, you are helpless," sighed Finkle.

Having no other choice, Itche-Godl laid his coat and hat on the floor. With trembling knees, he started for the bed. Suddenly it appeared to him he was looking down into a pit.

"What's the matter? Why don't you come?" Finkle grumbled.

"I think I see a pit," whispered Itche-Godl.

"What kind of pit?" Finkle cried out.

"A pit . . . it looks like a pit . . . what else could it be?" At these words he fell in, and there was the sound of rattling bones.

"What's happened?" Finkle demanded.

"I've fallen in! Save me!" moaned Itche-Godl, whose tongue was becoming numb. Finkle tried to get up, but was unable to move.

"I don't understand. Where could you have fallen? There aren't any pits here!" she screamed. For a long time both were silent. Then Finkle spoke: "Woe is me. . . . We have made fools of ourselves."

"What's the matter? Are you sick or something, God forbid?" asked Itche-Godl in a muffled voice.

And Finkle answered, her voice funereal: "I am worse than sick: I am dead!"

"Good Heavens! Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is One," gasped Itche-Godl, and those were his last words. The God-fearing widow Finkle answered: "Blessed be His Name, Whose glorious kingdom is for ever and ever. . . ."

The following morning the news spread throughout Warsaw that Finkle and her bridegroom had vanished on their wedding night. At first it was thought that the couple must have fled to Danzig, but why they should flee or from whom no one could conceive. Sometime afterward a letter came from Vienna which stated that Finkle had died there months earlier and been buried in a local cemetery. Only then did the people realize that the Finkle who had returned had been nothing but a phantom, and the entire series of events an illusion. They discovered, too, that over a year ago, a pauper named Itche-Godl had died in Warsaw. This man had returned twice to haunt his wife, who had remarried. In every household in the neighborhood, the mezuzahs were examined. Ten Jews went to Itche-Godl's grave to beg his forgiveness, to pledge him to remain in eternal rest and to torment the living no more. To appease the corpse, the community erected a tombstone over his grave. Thus Itche-Godl, who went unmourned from the world, became famous after death. And when Tryna-Rytza, his former wife, was, with luck, delivered of a son, she named him after her first husband: Itche-Godl.

So much for two of the corpses I sent dancing. But Itche-Godl and Finkle are not the only ones. I play such tricks often. The world is full of dead ones in sable capes and fur coats who carouse among the living. Maybe your neighbor, maybe your wife, maybe you yourself. . . . Unbutton your shirt. It's just possible that underneath your clothes your body is wrapped in a shroud.

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MICHAEL NOVAK

AMERICAN CATHOLICISM AFTER THE COUNCIL

THE CITY OF Rome rests placidly in the crystalline Italian sun, century by century, and generations of men appear within her walls and disappear. There are men today, on all continents, who shed tears when they confront her beauty and her seeming eternality. But today the city is the symbol of crisis, not of peace.

Countless Roman Catholics of the present generation are challenging, not the essential truths of the Catholic faith, and not even the role of the bishop of Rome, but the mystical hold which the limited traditions of the city of Rome have long exercised upon the Catholic world. It is inevitable that a Church be secular. How else could a Church live in history, except by entering into the historical forms of its time and place? But if a Church must in any case be secular, many Catholics in the middle of the 20th century are asking: why must its secularism be Roman and of the baroque Italian period?

Hardly a conflict at the Second Vatican Council has not been colored by this fundamental issue: whether the Church shall be Latin or Catholic. The fundamental opposition is between a party of nostalgia on the one hand, and a party of the present and the real on the other. Yet it would be a serious mistake to underestimate the intelligence, seriousness, conviction, and past successes of the party of nostalgia. The Church over which that party has presided has for generations captured the imagination and the intellectual allegiance of legions of talented men. Through most difficult and disturbing times, defended and guided by the party of nostalgia, the Church has come to the threshold of a new age intact and robust.

It is a remarkable fact that although anti-Catholicism has long been the anti-Semitism of the intellectuals, and although the atheist has appropriated to himself all the moral pro-words which attract the young—honesty, courage, integrity, and the rest—the Catholic Church is at the present moment more intellectually fit than she has been for centuries. There have seldom been so many first-rate artists, writers, theologians, philosophers, and men of affairs who are also Catholic. It is true that countless young people of sensitivity and intelligence have left the Church in these centuries, and continue to do so at a high rate. But her present health is a direct result of the imagination and intelligence and energy of those many who have remained within.

For some ninety years and longer, an intellectual underground has been building up in Roman Catholicism. Small at first, centering in groups of writers, theologians, and philosophers, now in Paris, now in Tübingen, now at Munich, London, Louvain, Milan, or even Rome, this underground has self-consciously labored for the renewal and reform of Roman Catholicism from within.

Since early in the last century, young theologians like Johann Möhler of Tübingen (d. 1838) have been working for the reunion of the churches, and writers in France and Germany have strained every nerve to draw Catholicism out of her isolation from the contemporary world. A curious phenomenon all these years is that outsiders writing or speaking of Catholicism have often been as Roman, hierarchical, and monolithic in their view of the Church as the most conservative Catholics. Such outsiders called "Catholic" only those manifestations which bore the stamp of curial and official Rome; perhaps 95 per cent of their utterances about Catholicism had the curial hierarchical pyramid, not the living underground, in mind. Hence the great sense of surprise, shock, and at first hesitant pleasure which nearly everywhere greeted the "new" attitudes of Pope John and the Council.

To be sure, this preoccupation with the outward appearance of pre-Johannine Catholicism was in large measure justified. "Every time one of us succeeds in stirring a little flame in the ashes," François Mauriac once wrote, "someone from curial Rome comes and crushes it." Nevertheless, the unpreparedness of most professional commentators on Catholicism (H. Stuart Hughes is one notable exception) for what has come to the surface since 1962 is the symptom of a sickness in contemporary intellectual life. The antipathy and prejudice which have in the main prevented sympathetic studies of the role of Catholicism in

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Western civilization are something of a scandal. All too often, especially in the United States, intelligent Catholics, under questioning, have stated what they believe their faith to involve, only to be faced with the rejoinder: "But you can't be in good standing and hold that, can you?" The stereotype is a burden, and the Catholic, like the Negro and the Jew, would like to be taken for what he is, not for what Cardinal Spellman, Graham Greene, Charles de Gaulle, and other assorted Catholics are.

THE PRESENT TURMOIL in the Catholic Church has been occasioned by the official recognition at the Vatican Council of the fact that there are in the Church countless styles of Catholic life, many competing theologies, many philosophies of man, and many conceptions of freedom and law. Italian Catholics and Irish Catholics live in quite different emotional worlds. When the French say *liberté* they do not mean what Americans mean by freedom; Englishmen and Spaniards speaking of law have different concrete experiences in mind; a German and a Latin American mean different things by order; some Catholics in Africa understand spontaneously the notion "people of God," since they are still living a tribal life which is more like that of biblical peoples than is Western life today. "Catholic" does not mean universal and the same, but universal and diverse.

Moreover, it is impossible to make sense out of the current restlessness among Roman Catholics without recalling that, after 1789, nearly every major Catholic institution of learning in Northern Europe—and often in the South as well—was seized by the state. Originality and imagination in Catholic studies were at a low ebb in the 18th century; but in the 19th, Catholic studies were virtually wiped out. Moral theology, for example, as a recent book by John T. Noonan, Jr.,* intimates, endured a gap in scholarship for almost the entire first two generations of the 19th century. Only toward mid-century were libraries reassembled, eclectic surveys of previous scholarship organized, seminary manuals hastily put together. Too early to benefit by the fruits of historical scholarship just being organized, but cut off by two generations from a living tradition, 19th century Catholic moral theology had virtually to be begun from scraps. Into the vacuum rushed the canon lawyers; about four-fifths of the material in standard textbooks on moral theology used in Catholic seminaries (Regatillo-Zalba, for example) is borrowed from canon law. Here lie the roots of the present Catholic dilemma on birth control.

In 1870, the First Vatican Council articulated the faith of Catholics in the infallibility of the Church, in which the pope shares; marching armies drove the Council from Rome before the complementary role of the bishops could be discussed. Theologically, the chief effect of what the Council did was to establish stringent conditions upon papal teaching, so that the line between the pope's personal opinions and his articulation of the faith of all is now clearly marked. Nevertheless, the chief psychological effect was a heightening of the baroque monarchical view of the papacy dear to certain Roman hearts.

Worse still, modern means of communication were shortly to change the impact and universality of papal teaching; the stage was set for the most pyramidal period in the history of the Church. The pope would be seen as the peak of the pyramid, the papal curia as an intermediary between him and the bishops; below the bishops would come priests and religious, and, like an iceberg nine-tenths of which is under water, laymen would be left by canon law with hardly a mention. (Even now when laymen speak about the Church, they speak of "they." "When will the Church do something about birth control?" means "When will *they*. . . .")

This same period marked the Celtic ascendancy in the Church: not only did Ireland gain political independence from England and ecclesiastical subservience at home, but Irish bishops multiplied in the United States, in Australia, in England, and throughout the mission lands of the British Empire. The Celtic bishops have maintained a theological tradition largely isolated from the life of our times, unfertilized by dissent or pluralism, greatly inclined to viewing the Church as a pyramid and seriously vulnerable to establishing a personality cult around the pope. On the other side of the ledger, the Celtic bishops are in the main excellent organization men, whose primary virtue is loyalty.

In an era of radio, teletype, and television, meanwhile, papal teaching suddenly became not merely the theology of the bishop of Rome, distant and localized, but the ordinary teaching of the Church spread through the world—particularly wherever the non-intellectual Irish were in charge. The whole system of checks and balances in Roman Catholicism was upset. Now, because of radio and the daily press, and a heretofore unheard-of deference to Rome, the "ordinary teaching" of the bishops had lost its crucial theological role. *Whatever* the pope said was now known everywhere, on the instant, and was much more gravely discussed than hitherto. It has become a serious, novel, and yet common misconception among some Catholics to accept all papal opinions as if they were gospel truth.

Three amusing ironies are at work here. The first is that the hyperpapalists often try to comfort non-Catholics by noting that the exercise of papal infallibility is, necessarily, a most rare occurrence. But before their own people, they endow nearly every papal instruction with some subtle measure of infallibility: "near to being infallible" or the like. (Their opponents retort that infalli-

* *Contraception*, Harvard University Press, 561 pp., $7.95.

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bility, like pregnancy, is or isn't; there's no in-between.)

The second irony is that most of the hyper-papalists, in practice, are selective in their attitude toward Rome; they discount the instructions they don't like—Pius XI on social reconstruction and the sins of capitalism, for example, or Pius XII on liturgical reform.

The third irony is that since 1878 and the pontificate of Leo XIII most of the popes, skipping over the heads of the bishops, have been in alliance with the intellectual underground. The popes have been "liberal," the bishops in the main have not. Leo's *Rerum Novarum,* for example, was a belated effort to awaken the baroque apathies of Roman Catholics to the magnitude of the social reconstruction required in our time; it was a response to the challenge of socialism. Even Leo's choice of Thomas Aquinas as special teacher of the Church was an appeal to historical studies—Leo well knew the low estate of Catholic scholarship in the 19th century, and Thomas Aquinas was infinitely better than the manuals then so recently scraped together (and misleadingly purporting to be "Thomistic").

The popes since Leo XIII have been an extraordinary series of leaders. Fr. Gustav Weigel, S.J., said once, not long before his death: "We've had good popes for too long; nothing would be better for the faith than a bad one." Fr. Weigel had a horror of Christians who put their faith not in God but in men; and he seemed to believe that overemphasis on the pope was a characteristic vice of the Catholicism of our time. Others, less gentle than Fr. Weigel, call this vice the Celtic heresy.

Yet every heresy contains a portion of truth, and its error is usually by exaggeration. The Second Vatican Council has set in motion the elaboration of a more authentic view of the role of the bishop of Rome. The distinguishing mark of God's covenanted people is its service to others, and the relationships which unite that people are also relations of service. Bishops and priests are chosen from among the people to represent them before God, to minister to their needs, to preside at their worship, to teach, to govern. They are clearly warned not to rule as the rulers of the Gentiles, but by service. And the servant of these servants of God, the center of unity among them, is the bishop of Rome.

The pope has two special services to offer the Catholic people. In the first place, he is a focal point of unity—one of the college of bishops, and yet not merely one among equals, because also the central focus of the others. (The relations between pope and college are not yet thoroughly worked out in history; a great deal remains to be learned through future developments.) In the second place, he offers a single clear voice by which, in time of need, the conscience of the Church can be articulated—in exceptional cases, even without consulting the bishops. Hochhuth's play testifies to the usefulness of such a ministry in Christianity; he does not single out the World Council of Churches or the Catholic bishops for equal blame with Pius XII.

Just before the opening of the Second Vatican Council, one of the outstanding theologians of the Catholic underground, later to become the chief light of the Council, voiced his pessimism. "The Council is coming fifty years too soon; if only we had more time!" Everywhere the men working for renewal and reform were hitching their belts for another long siege; they knew renewal would win in the end, but a retrogressive Council might postpone the day. They feared that the many hundreds of Italian bishops, the Spanish and Latin American bishops, and the Celtic bishops would rubber-stamp the seminary theology of the last three generations. "We thought we would come in October, say yes, and be home for good by Christmas," one American bishop later confessed.

Pope John's opening address to the Council on October 11, 1962, was the beginning of the end of the Roman style in the Church. The Pope called for a *pastoral* Council—a realistic Council, a Council attending to the needs of men. No condemnations. No definitions. No subtleties. Traditional *Romanità* could not thrive on that sort of ground.

THERE IS no need to recapitulate here the story of the Council thus far.* As to its repercussions in America, however, from 1962 on, pioneering ecumenical gatherings in city after city, attracting thousands, have been electric in their impact. In 1964, Cardinal Cushing urged Boston Catholics for their spiritual profit to listen to Billy Graham. Nuns from St. Louis marched in Selma, Alabama, in 1965; and in quiet defiance of orders from the chancery (while Cardinal Cushing was ill and in the hospital) hundreds of priests and seminarians then marched with the Catholic Interracial Council in the South Boston St. Patrick's Day parade. All of a sudden, things which long ago should have happened are happening. The distance covered between 1962 and 1965 is little short of amazing.

But the distance covered is only, let us say, from 1789 to 1945. Pope John wanted an *aggiornamento* that would bring the Church "up to today." The Council has, in the end, let him down. The Council has hardly begun to cope with the world of the coming era on which we have already embarked. Looking backward, the Council is an astonishing success. But looking forward, the Council is in many ways a failure. Perhaps a Council—an unwieldy organ of more than two-thousand men—must inevitably work twenty years or so behind the time, dealing with issues that

* See, e.g., the reports by the pseudonymous Xavier Rynne, published by Farrar, Straus & Giroux.

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are ripe for institutional resolution. Perhaps it is enough that the Council has established the *principle* of renewal and reform, and that the old Roman will to eternality and changelessness appears to be broken. The Church is an historical, ever-changing institution, as the Council has recognized; that very fact liberates the energies of the Church to meet the future on its own terms, to enter the coming secular culture as enthusiastically, though in an entirely new manner, as she entered the secular culture of ancient Greece, or Rome, or the early Northern countries of Europe.

But a vision of the secular civilization of the future hardly seems to have entered the minds of many of the bishops. Too many of them are more concerned about the "confusions" which the recent changes are causing among their previously undisturbed flocks. Some of the bishops are of an appallingly rigid and frightened cast of mind: Bishop Hannon of Scranton has forbidden his people to take part in Bible vigils (a danger to their faith); Bishop Topel of Spokane has called 1964 "a year of shame" because the newly awakened Catholic press has been calling spades spades, and naming bishops by name for what they do or don't do. Unaccustomed to being held to account for their actions like other men, some bishops may be forgiven for sighing after the good old days.

NEVERTHELESS, the world in which we live is a serious world, not a toy for timid bishops. Between thirty and fifty million people in Europe have been killed by violence since this century began, and the same moral, political, social, and economic factors which contributed to this bloodshed are still operative. A new civilization, as Albert Camus saw in *The Rebel,* is rising on the rubble heap left by the Second World War, a civilization technical beyond any ever known, international in scope, and secularist in attitude. The Church has no time to worry about how deeply a bishop's feelings may be hurt. The question for her is whether the yeast of religious faith will be able to penetrate this technical world at all.

Pope John XXIII was sufficiently sensitive to feel the malaise which after the Second World War gripped Europe and the world: old traditions have been discredited, old beliefs are mere words on the lips even to many who hold them, and for values like justice, human dignity, and liberty it is very difficult to give an intellectual justification. From a coldly scientific point of view, the planet Earth is insignificant; among men, the species is of more significance than the individual; the natural course of history treats men cruelly. It is difficult, as Albert Camus found, to argue one's way out of the nihilism which facts seem to force upon us.

In the United States, few saw dramatized in fire and in pain the depths of modern nihilism; besides, the more limited illusions of the pragmatist live longer. Anglo-American life has always maintained amenities of fair play, liberty, and law, for which no creditable account is to be found in Anglo-American philosophy. Such amenities are a part of the Anglo-American inheritance, part of our acquired fund of sentiment which David Hume extolled and which is not yet bankrupt. So long as this inheritance lasts, many philosophers will be able to continue their games with words. But one day they will have to resume the hard work of articulating why we value individual persons more than things, why persons are valuable beyond their usefulness or beyond the contributions they make to the economy, and what, in short, a man is.

These are questions in which believers and non-believers have an equal stake, and which are absolutely fundamental for the future. The Council convened by Pope John has barely touched these questions, having become deeply involved in ecclesiastical problems. Thus, as Cardinal Lercaro of Bologna recently warned in Rome, there is a grave danger that the Council will not have lived up to the vision of Pope John. In no case are the documents approved by the Council representative of the best that Catholic theology has to offer. In every case, compromise with the men of *Romanità* or with the bishops who lacked theological sophistication was required. The Council was, under the leadership of Roman minds, badly prepared. It was snatched from disaster only by the ardent hopes and example of Pope John, assisted by the energy, intelligence, and determination of a score of leaders among the cardinals and bishops of the world.

It seems that the bishops, particularly those of the United States, have hardly grasped the extent to which not only the Middle Ages but also the modern age are at an end; a new, technical, secular, urban, pluralistic age has begun. Language appropriate for an agricultural society no longer conveys meaning; even the word "father" means something different for the human spirit after Freud, not to mention what it means in "broken" homes or in those millions of families whose lives center not on parents but on teenagers.

"Secularism" for many of the American bishops is a dirty word; they blame on it virtually every ill that plagues society, from racial discrimination to lurid advertising. The bishops hardly ever recognize their own complicity in the evils of modern life; one seldom hears them, as a group, confess their own sins. There are, after all, bishops who have in the name of prudence compromised their professed moral code in the matter of race (but who even in the name of the same prudence brook no compromise in the matter of birth control). But most of all, the bishops have yet to come to grips with the fact that atheism and agnosticism represent a noble way of life, a way

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of life which is more attractive than Celtic folk religion to many young, educated Catholics.

A fourteen-year-old girl was recently overheard to say on a campus where she had come to attend a Newman Club meeting: "They're talking about Scripture and liturgy. But I came here to find out *whether there's a God.*" The Catholic people have changed in character under the system of universal education the atheists of the Enlightenment saw fit to pioneer, and under the system of parochial schools the German and Irish bishops of the United States insisted on providing for them. Catholics in the United States constitute the largest body of college-educated Catholics in the history of the Church.

In the last few years, partly under the release granted them by Kennedy's election, partly under the impact of the Council, partly by the ripeness of time, Catholics in the United States have "aged" remarkably. In the schools and universities, in the Catholic and secular press, and in Church meeting rooms, the atmosphere is charged with questions, criticisms, and initiatives. The drive to understand, the drive of inquiry and personal appropriation, has clearly been awakened, and pupils from the schools the bishops took such pains to build are, as it were, turning around to bite the bishops' hands. Teachers of the old style hardly know how to cope. The defensive speak of a "breakdown in the spirit of obedience." But in reality nothing has broken down but the image of the pyramid; the questioners and the doers are obeying the Council's directives and following the Council's example.

It is in this sense that the Council has had its greatest success. Catholics now want the whole Church, every day and everywhere, to be one large Council: full of free speech, argument, dissent, respect for diversity, and the slow search for consensus. Not all the bishops are like Pope John; not all like this kind of Church. But who, then, are the better Catholics, those of the Church of silence, conformity and comfort, or those of the Church of freedom and dissent?

In fact, the spirit of faith and obedience among Catholics has seldom been more alert; but this faith is directed toward the whole Church rather than toward the local pastor or diocesan bishop. Catholics listen now with two ears: one for the local voice, one for the voice of renewal and reform which is stirring in many other places, including the Council, if not locally. It is difficult for some pastors to be reminded, perhaps for the first time, that they are stewards and not masters of the faith. In the old days, the great ideal of many a pastor was to let nothing disturb the waters; now such a man hesitates, for fear the disturbance might be the Holy Spirit.

BUT IF the newer Catholics have two ears, they also have three eyes. That, at least, is the claim of Daniel J. Callahan's new collection, *The Generation of the Third Eye.** The title is taken from a phrase of John Courtney Murray's, about the introspective, analytic temper of the times, and the contributors are writers, artists, and scholars who are under forty. John Cogley, who at forty-eight finds himself untimely placed in an older generation, adds an "afterword" which shows, if anything can, that there is a difference between the generations.

Two points emerge from this collection. One is that for nearly every contributor the ordinary parish life of the Church in America has been virtually bankrupt. The sermons are abominable, both in theology and in culture; the churches are run as "parish plants" rather than as praying and believing communities. The financial strain of building and maintaining parochial schools seems to have made practical materialists out of the Catholic community.

Secondly, nearly every one of the writers represented has found his nourishment as a Catholic not from the ecclesiastical structure but from the intellectual Catholic underground. Years ago, this one discovered Bernanos and Bloy, or that one Simone Weil. Through a friendship here, a prophetic book there, they developed against the stream of unintellectual Catholicism. It seems likely that the next generation of such Catholics, now in the colleges, will number in the scores of thousands; for the Council has made the underground official.

To be sure, some members of the underground are reacting as if the war were still on; everyone is anticipating a backlash among the bishops. It is perfectly plain that the bishops of the United States, especially those along the Eastern seaboard (Cardinal Spellman and the two recent Apostolic Delegates purportedly share a large responsibility for their nomination) were unprepared for the Council. Many of them for years strenuously opposed liturgical reform, did little to publish the social encyclicals of the popes, treated the new theology of Rahner, Congar, Danièlou, and others as vaguely heretical, and knew almost nothing of the intellectual revolution in contemporary biblical studies. It would be too much to expect that all of these bishops, after a brief "graduate school" exposure at the Council to what has been going on in Catholicism these last ninety years, will be able to relay their discoveries to the often unread, firmly set monsignors and pastors who preside over the daily life of their dioceses.

Still, most of the bishops of the United States appear not only to have benefited immeasurably by the Council, but also to have begun to win over their clergy and their Waugh-like laymen. One of the touching aspects of the Council was the sight of old men changing the ideas of a lifetime, and voting—for the good of the Church—for ideas they had many long years opposed. "If you had told

* Sheed & Ward, 256 pp., $4.95.

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me last week that I would vote yes this morning, I'd have said you were crazy," one Archbishop from the Midwest told a reporter at the Council, "but I did."

WHAT, THEN, of the future? The fact that the underground is now official has temporarily brought a wavering in the sense of direction. Since their inception, journals like *The Commonweal* and *Cross Currents* had been saying that reform and renewal are required; suddenly Pope John and the Council have concurred. Now what?

There are enormous institutional problems to be dealt with in Roman Catholicism. There are too few places in which the insight, experience, and concern of the laymen are made institutionally effective. Laymen are given no responsibility; in the business world and in government they are treated as adults, but in the Church as children. The extreme spiritual poverty of parish and diocesan community life seems to be due chiefly to this enforced childlikeness.

One of the brightest spots is the fact that the nearly two hundred thousand nuns in the United States, especially those from the Midwest and the West, are moving swiftly into 20th-century and secular American life; the example of the six from St. Louis who marched at Selma was a shot heard round the country: even in Boston.

Serious sectional problems are also involved. The Catholic cities of the Eastern seaboard are depressingly dead; the Celtic heresy has killed them. Sister Marie Augusta Neal's thesis for Harvard, *Values and Interests in Social Change,** a study of the Boston clergy, indicates that the future in Boston, at least, is hopeful. But the Boston Catholic paper, *The Pilot,* often has to be ecclesiastically careful, and, when the Cardinal is out of the office, the chancery can be as narrow, complacent, and restrictive as any in the country. Let us not speak of Providence, New York, the major sees of New Jersey, or Philadelphia.

Wherever one visits in America, one finds again and again that the fundamental problem of American Catholicism lies in the bureaucratic minds who hover like flies around many of the bishops, the nervous Nellies of the chancery offices who censor books, discourage talks with Protestants, fear that the Council has caused "confusion" among the faithful, and build (as in one diocese) $400,000 and (in another) $90,000 rectories for the use of no more than four priests. Such men may be loyal administrators and genial golf companions and they may often think of themselves as the most select group in the world; but many of them should recognize that they are among the most unenlightened, mediocre, and complacent men who ever represented the gospels of Jesus Christ.

This problem is formally like that which afflicts civil government and even universities: how can a living institution make effective in its midst not only bureaucrats but also prophets? How do you get, and keep, open minds and free spirits in administrative posts?

The problem is only exacerbated by the tradition of authoritarianism in the Church and by the tradition of celibacy. The fact is commonly discussed among Catholics that too many of those who advance in the hierarchy seem attracted to these traditions because of their own emotional disturbances. It is probable that some manifestations of ecclesiastical power reveal deep personal insecurity. There are very few checks-and-balances in Church structure to minimize the potential dangers of such disequilibrium.

St. Augustine, that great bishop, once wrote in self-reflection that bishops are the enemies of the Church, and surely it is true that every blindness of the local bishop injures the life of the diocese he serves. The Catholic people, and the clergy, need institutional safeguards against abuses. The monsignori in Chicago who resisted Cardinal Meyer's every effort to integrate the parochial schools—for fear those who form the economic base of their huge, brick parish plants would move away—and some among the clique who form a purple guard around Cardinal Spellman are by their impenetrable complacency scandals to every alert man who encounters them.

Connected with this issue are several others. The ordinary parish priests, particularly the assistant pastor, are at the present time the least free members of the Church. In canon law, they have almost no protection for what may be called in imitation of Thoreau "evangelical disobedience." How can the gospels be preached when those of sensitive conscience are forbidden by administrative prudence to avoid disturbing the present order? Many a priest finds himself saying one thing in private, another in public. What is the use of giving one's life to the service of the gospels if one is made to serve, instead, the timidity of those who, with whatever good intentions, flatter the rich, the powerful, the secure?

Besides, the Catholic people have, until recently, been unwilling to let a priest speak in his own name; he is taken much too seriously as speaking for the entire Church. Consequently, many priests do not speak their own minds; they mouth accepted conventions which will "disturb" no one. Their acquiescence has entangled them in spiderwebs of their own weaving, and only their own courage will free them and the gospels to which they are dedicated.

Thirdly, the descendants of Europe's peasants are only now beginning to lift their eyes from the vulgar and aggressive search for dollars which they found to be the obvious requirement for coping with the Protestant Establishment of the United States. No one is deceived into thinking that "the emerging laymen" (a descriptive phrase

* Prentice-Hall, 192 pp., $4.95 (paperback, $2.95).

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for the religiously and intellectually alert) in this country number more than a few score thousand, perhaps a few hundred thousand. Apathy, indifference to religion except as a vague and ultimate comfort, and docility in early assimilating the pyramidal view of the Church mark the vast majority of American Catholics. Here, again, the situation faced by Catholicism in the United States is formally similar to that of the life of general culture and the intellect: the vast majority of the people belong spiritually to the hucksters of Hollywood, Madison Avenue, and the thoughtless pulpit.

BUT THESE are largely intramural issues. The internal political structure of the Church as it exists at present inhibits spiritual and intellectual development; and it is the business of laymen, nuns, priests, and bishops who care about such things to reform the structure and practices of the institution they love.

On a wider front, there are a whole host of issues of concern to all Americans in which the Church is more or less "officially" involved: education, for example. An increasing number of educated Catholics are critical of the parochial schools not so much because these are intellectually inferior to the public schools (often they aren't), but because their graduates do not seem noticeably different in behavior and attitudes from those who go to the public schools. Why put millions of dollars into a program of such meager religious fruitfulness?

The younger Catholic intellectuals—often products of the Catholic schools—are the most vociferous critics of the schools. But in many new suburbs, the people of the parish rather than the clergy insist on the building of a Catholic school. Many parents seem to feel incompetent to educate their own children in religious matters; they seem to need the feeling of security which comes from placing their children under the moral protection of priests and nuns. Meanwhile, those who teach in the schools, trying valiantly to reach new standards both in secular disciplines and in the "new theology" of Vatican II, become increasingly sensitive to criticism, whose truth they are often willing to admit but whose practicality they sometimes question.

Three relatively modest propositions appear to be developing as a feasible and widespread attitude toward this question: (1) At some period in their education, Catholic children ought to have *some* formal Catholic education; otherwise, their theological education will fall below their general education. But they should spend part of their career also in public and secular schools; (2) At least one important part of religious education can best be given in the home, through public prayer in church, and through personal reading and organized discussion groups; (3) The maintenance of an independent Catholic school system, for part of the education of at least part of the Catholic population, contributes to the diversity and richness of American education.

On a second important public issue, racial justice, only a year ago the inactivity of Catholics threatened to dissipate the trust and good feeling of the then just budding ecumenical movement. For the very Jews and Protestants who were most apt to be open to new dialogue with Catholics were among the first to become sensitive to the moral demands of the racial revolution; and they were scandalized by Catholic inactivity. But gradually, through the lonely witness of such men as the Berrigan brothers (one a Jesuit, one a Josephite), and through the pressure of other active spirits who increasingly allowed themselves to be diverted from the work of Vatican II and other intramural matters, more and more Catholic consciences were touched. An institutional mark of sorts was reached when the well-known Paulist Center on Boston Common threw open its doors, in May 1965, to an ecumenically sponsored teach-in on the emotionally charged issue of racial imbalance in the Boston public schools.

Several important traits of the American Catholic community came to light in these developments; and these traits illuminate Catholic attitudes on other problems. In America more than in Europe, many Catholics are victims of the serious flaws in late scholastic philosophy and theology; many interpret reality through eyes blinded to certain important features. For example, American Catholics commonly interpret a generalization as a normative statement; they register the descriptive mode only with difficulty. If a psychologist or a sociologist describes what frequently happens, they take him to be recommending a course of action; detached analysis is seldom credited. "Is" (in the tradition of the Aristotelian final cause) is taken as an "ought."

Again, many American Catholics are fond of verbal solutions to concrete problems. If the American bishops *said* in 1957 that racial discrimination is immoral, and said it solemnly in their annual proclamation, many Catholics feel the problem has been solved.

Again, if the essential position of the Church is once enunciated, then many American Catholics believe it is illegitimate to blame the Church for the concrete, individual actions or attitudes of the Catholic clergy or people. Thus, if Pius XII in (as Albert Camus sadly noted) an obscure encyclical condemned Nazism, then the *Church* was not involved in Hitler's wars, only errant individuals were. In fact, even if Pius XII had not spoken, the *Church* would have "spoken," silently. For the *Church* is a pure, immaculate, spotless Platonic ideal, not to be confused with the sinners who give her flesh in history. The Church, for example, has always believed in religious liberty, never persecuted Jews or Protestants, always fostered truth and scientific inquiry, ever cham-

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pioned the rights of man, never approved racial discrimination.

Again, the upper blade of Platonic unreality in late scholasticism makes necessary a lower blade of Machiavellian "prudence" in dealing with actual complexities in history. The very bishop who believes most in the sinlessness of the Platonic Church is apt to have a finger in many deals involving local real estate; another is warning the local newspaper not to print a certain story; another is pressuring politicians in this direction or in that. Italian and Irish bishops, in particular, seem to have mastered the regular swing of the pendulum from the rhetoric of sermons on the sinless beauty of the Church to the vigorous use of power for the worldly needs of the Church.

Finally, many American Catholics still seem to prefer group loyalty to truth; self-congratulation to honesty. There is at present a vogue of criticism and self-accusation, to be sure; but many are still untouched by it, and many who voice it seem surprised at the new possibility of speaking out; like Edward M. Keating of *Ramparts,* they sound not a little strident.

This group loyalty has largely blinded American Catholics to the needs of other groups. The oscillation between idealism and cynical prudence has led American Catholics to believe in racial justice while tolerating racial injustice. The emphasis on essential definition rather than on personal appropriation and responsibility, and the confusion of the normative with the descriptive, have enabled American Catholics to be blind to concrete realities in the name of "unchanging principles."

These same traits of mind characterize the usual American Catholic foray into American social or political life, on the censorship of movies, on birth control clinics, on aid to parochial schools, etc. Often the values which Catholics wish to uphold in these matters are commendable in themselves; but the political and social techniques for defending them smack of Italian or Irish scholasticism. Essentialistic, non-historical, and abstract ideals are voiced on the one hand, and ecclesiastical prestige is wielded as political power on the other.

Increasingly, this mental scholasticism is yielding to the sunshine of American liberties and the brisk winds of American realities. Cardinal Cushing has recently recognized that the Catholic conscience need not be articulated in public law, and tentatively approved the amendment of the birth control laws of Massachusetts so that they would be more in conformity with the general public conscience. Catholics can maintain their stricter views in private; the domain of public law is distinguishable from the domain of personal conscience.

Pope John XXIII, Cardinal Cushing's closest ecclesiastical model, made another important distinction in *Mater et Magistra,* concerning Communism: the original ideology is one thing, the reality which has evolved under historical pressures is another. Late scholasticism pure and simple was unable to make such a distinction; in its purview, only logic and essential definitions mattered.

In proportion as American Catholics learn to distinguish essences from existents, norms from descriptions, logic from history, their political and social actions will become increasingly more nuanced, reasoned, and appropriate to a democratic society. Catholics will ever have a moral code more strict in certain matters than many other Americans, but their way of defending the values they cherish can become both more effective from their own point of view and less repugnant to others. A more historically minded and concrete philosophy and theology, already gaining in acceptance, will gradually make this transition in intellectual style possible.

* * *

MANY OF THE younger Catholic intellectuals, however, are involved neither in the intramural problems of the Church nor in the problems of the "official" Church and American culture. They are getting their degrees or are teaching in the whole spectrum of academic studies, are entering political life or the professions, are active in urban renewal or journalism or the arts. They have little or no interest in ecclesiastical matters; they often resent the ecclesiastical establishment as vaguely stupid, or narrow, or merely professional. They have never had a conversation with a bishop and, except with a personal friend or relative, rarely with a priest. They often remain practicing Catholics, faithful to the sacraments. But the world of the spirit in which they live is that of the general secular world rather than that of the Catholic community at large.

They are concerned about the fact that automobiles are choking our cities; that the very poor continue to suffer gravely in our society; that our complex democracy requires the replacement of venal-minded and unintelligent politicians with men of talent, of some vision, and of suitably thick skin. They are worried about the inequalities suffered by women in our society. They are disturbed to the depths of their consciences by the risks of wider warfare the U.S. is courting. As Christians, they may feel they have a special stake in these problems, and special emphases in defining and attacking them. But they receive little enlightenment in how they might cope with such problems in church on Sunday morning.

Thus the great irony of American Catholicism is that, after decades of ecclesiastical warnings about the dangers of "secularism," the most sensitive and inquiring young Catholics are presently finding the spiritual values represented by Ameri-

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can secularism more compelling than the spiritual attitudes of the Catholic clerical establishment. The secular world has little to say, of course, about God, about ultimate questions of hope, destiny, and conscience; for such matters, and for the Eucharist which is their communal symbol, many young Catholics maintain their ties with the historic Church and its spiritual tradition. But they find a broadly conceived pragmatism to be a more adequate philosophical language for dealing with reality than late scholasticism. And they find contemporary political, economic, and social theory more morally relevant than most of the sermons they suffer through on Sunday mornings.

The future of American Catholicism will probably manifest an increasing secularization of the thought patterns of clergy and people, to the benefit of the religious faith they cherish. For though most varieties of American secularism appear to be agnostic, few appear to be absolutely closed to religious values. Consequently, many more Catholics will probably adopt some version of pragmatism, with an existentialist emphasis upon self-appropriation and self-criticism, as their basic philosophical and theological language. Given this language, they will add to the pluralistic values usually championed by secular philosophers, special religious values of their own. And their fundamental ethical and political decisions will involve balancing one of these values against another, in establishing what is best to do here and now on each occasion.

If this prediction is correct, American Catholics will in a sense be recovering the Aristotelian tradition of *phronesis* and the short-lived Thomistic tradition of concrete *prudentia* and *caritas,* which were swallowed up in the abstract, essentialistic "Reason" of late scholasticism. Neither Aristotle nor Thomas Aquinas, however, shared what would today be called "historical consciousness." Thus, the contribution of modern secularism to the wisdom which can be assimilated by the Church is above all an acute awareness of the historical and contingent factors which characterize human history and the development of human intelligence.

American Catholics have little to fear, and much to gain, from the critical assimilation of secular wisdom in their attempt to understand the meaning of their faith at this moment in human history. In so doing, from their own treasury they also bring their own special contribution to the general wisdom of our culture. Their tradition of contemplative life will have much to say to a world of greater leisure; their tradition of emptiness and abandonment in prayer will have much to say to those, like the Anglican Bishop J. A. T. Robinson, who suddenly discover that God cannot be imagined nor, strictly, conceived.

American culture and American Catholicism benefit by the mutual criticism and guarded but respectful cooperation they lend to one another. American Catholicism is becoming, and ought to become, different from any other form of Catholicism in history, because it is *American.* And America, without its minority groups and their special values, is homogenized and vulgar.

Each man who cherishes the needs of the human spirit is a precious asset in a land of buyers and sellers. Every analysis of the life of the spirit in the United States leads to the same conclusion: the real war, the bitter war which lies ahead, is for the soul of the American people. Who will get there first, the huckster and the demagogues, or men of reality and statesmen? On every corner there are barkers who desire, for a fee, to cover up the realities of the world of bloodshed in which we live. There are too few who speak with honesty, with reverence for human personality, with compassion for the weak, with restraining intelligence for the strong, with realism in action. Secular intellectuals and religious men who value such things need each other—and that is why American Catholicism needs soon to be making its intellectual and artistic contributions to American culture.

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THE DUTIFUL SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR

Mary Ellmann

SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR is distinguished by her consistency; on everything she writes, her identity is stamped indelibly. Her temperament is fused with her unwavering conviction, and both assist her in affirming moral right and upbraiding moral wrong. As Henri Perron says in her novel, *The Mandarins,* "There is so much to love and to hate solidly." But Beauvoir's solidity, her urgency, her unleavened purposefulness bear down upon their varied subjects with inconsiderate weight. By contrast, Sartre's performance in his autobiography is buoyant and volatile, agitated by metaphor. Curiously, it is this levity, ascribed by Sartre (in a characteristic leap) to his having been fatherless, that seems to separate the teacher from his best pupil.

Nonetheless, the stable incorporation of temperament and conviction has enabled Mlle. de Beauvoir to be productive, to earn rightly a reputation for courageous effort, prodigious research, and straightforward habits of thought; it has prompted her to shun timidity and to enjoy emphasis. She most values her honesty: "But I repeat that I have never intentionally distorted the truth." Her stance is that of the perceptive yet uncompromising mind. Reality is to be informed, in an almost divine sense, by the human intellect. The character, Françoise, in the first chapter of Beauvoir's first novel, *She Came to Stay,* initiates this activity:

> The red of the carpet gleamed through the darkness like a timid night-light. She exercised that power: her presence snatched things from their unconsciousness; she gave them their color, their smell.

The same standard of the person "as the eye-that-looks, as subject, consciousness, freedom," controls Beauvoir's new book *Force of Circumstance** now, twenty years later. The objects of interest to this enduring consciousness have been those interrelations of people which occur, if not always in public, in clear and open sight: the confrontation of postwar intellectuals and politics (*The Mandarins*), of generic woman and generic man (*The Second Sex*), of human beings and their environs (*America Day by Day* and the study of China, *The Long March*). Beauvoir's belief is that the person who writes, or the person written about, may enter upon a kind of universality, the freedom of becoming comprehensible to others. This belief tempted her to the verge of biography in her study of the Marquis de Sade (*Must We Burn Sade?*). What attracts her, as Genet's work attracts Sartre, is Sade's effort "to make of his psychophysical destiny an ethical choice." This he accomplished (in prison, like Genet) through writing, and writing in general, for Beauvoir, makes possible such transmogrification. And the more clearly each man presents himself for judgment by others, the sooner idiosyncrasy is exchanged for ethic, the better social and political fraternity all men may form.

Therefore, in much of Beauvoir's writing, one cannot properly expect to find verbal designs which delay rather than push, intrigue rather than direct. The meaning of her words is at once adequately clear: the reader can rush ahead with the writer, through the problem, its causes, its effects, its proposed solution—to action! But what of the times when the only discernible purpose in writing at all is to convey inactive, amoral, even ecstatic sensations?

> I listened to his even breathing; he was sleeping, and I didn't have the heart to awaken him. It's touching to see a man asleep: so innocent a sight.
>
> It was human, teeming, real, a city of the earth in which I, a flesh-and-blood I, was walking. How beautiful it was under its silvery brocade! I looked at it wide-eyed, and something stirred timidly in my heart. We think that it is love that gives the world all its brilliance, but the world, too, swells love with its riches. Love was dead, yet the earth was still there, intact, with its secret songs, its smells, its tenderness.
>
> I remembered how I used to breathe in the pureness of the night, how it would go to my head, fill my whole being with joy, and I would say to myself that if such moments didn't exist living would hardly be worth the effort. Would they ever be reborn?

Not in *The Mandarins.* Summoned in these terms, memories—socially inconsequential, personally vital—refuse to budge.

In the end, this is perhaps the first difficulty in Mlle. de Beauvoir's effort to explore herself, the total person, incompletely prefigured in such fictional heroines as Françoise (*She Came to Stay*) and Anne Dubreuilh (*The Mandarins*). Now that her autobiography seems to be complete—the *Memoirs of a Dutiful Daughter* (1959) and *The Prime of Life* (1962) being joined by *Force of Circumstance*—the rules by which this self-accounting is played, and the issues with which it copes, become clearer. One premise has been Sartre's, that it is desirable in writing to "restore to time its actual course." Quite logically, then, many pages (1,499) have been needed to retrace many years. A second principle is to be faithful

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to contingency, the uncontrollable, accidental proliferation of circumstance by which the person is surrounded. So all details, at all levels of experience, enjoy a perfect democracy. Whatever is seen is represented, just as in police photography the snapshot of the corpse is immediately followed by a snapshot of the half-empty glass of ginger ale making a ring on the bedside table. "Elegance," by which Beauvoir evidently means deliberate selection of detail, is eschewed; it is rather through loyalty to *all* of the actual that her life is to be made flesh:

> I have always had the secret fantasy that my life was being recorded, down to the tiniest detail, on some giant tape recorder, and that the day would come when I should play back the whole of my past.

But the tape recorder often distorts sound. The pledge of allegiance to detail alone cannot restore to circumstance, as it flung itself at Beauvoir, what Sartre calls "its brutal freshness, its ambiguity, its unforeseeability." Some involuntary selection is self-evident: the one person, especially the one vehement person, tends to see the same things everywhere. Others would notice what she missed. And, of course, the detail comes before the reader only as it is shaped in the writer's words. Elegance in the record may be objectionable, but its alternative, though it may be inelegance, cannot be reality.

The impossibility of ever giving independent life again to what had independent life before it disappeared beneath the surface of a mind, is if anything, more marked in Beauvoir than in other writers. Her opinions, her interpretations, are extraordinarily intrusive. Her convictions, like her hands, are always clenched. Such traits, advantages perhaps to the politician or social worker, are less lucky in the writer, particularly the writer bent on recreating the unpredictability of actual life. The surprise of experience is less evident than the monotony of fixed responses to it.

THE *Memoirs of a Dutiful Daughter* is the best book of the autobiography, partly because it is the first, instead of the second or the third, statement of this absolute personality. It is also the most frightening. For all Beauvoir's attachment to disparate details now, the *Memoirs* is not constructed by that standard. Its materials are coherent, its single, all-pervasive aim gives it the unity of obsession. On one level, it examines the development, in her first twenty years, of the temperament and conviction by which we recognize the adult Simone de Beauvoir. She herself sees the book as a document of her escape from the shibboleths of French Catholic middle-class life. But on a second level, the book grows into an impersonal exemplum: it propounds the ravenous nature of human beginnings, each birth the creation of a new and separate appetite, a mouth stretched open. The mouth bites, the jaws chew, the throat gulps down. Presented circumstances are devoured (if they are agreeable) or spat out (if they are not). Beauvoir wanted to say, and does say, that in defiance of set persuasions and prohibitions, a person can realize his freedom. But the book unwittingly traces in the mind the outlines of absent images, the dun virtues that may lie in the acceptance of restraints.

Still, the search for food is absorbing, and finding it is always a kind of triumph. That sequence grants the *Memoirs,* like *Robinson Crusoe,* a genuine impetus. *Force of Circumstance* is, in contrast, sluggish, sated. In the *Memoirs* temperament wriggles toward its proper conviction with an almost protozoan intent; now the two have grown tired together. The early longing to write, to be published, to be recognized, has diminished to the rancors and grudges that circle within the circle of the recognized. The French middle class, that old palpable villain, is formless now. Beauvoir still hates it, but by rote, and the epithet "bourgeois idealism" has become just a rattling noise. In fact, the avid seizure of new experience in the earlier books is often now a joyless, obligatory reiteration. Human beings, the new book indicates, must endlessly repeat themselves. Not only is each person a sealed container, held for life within his own skin, but the number of things he can do, even in Paris, is cruelly limited. And the more often they are done, the less apparent reason for doing them, the less energy for doing them again.

Energy has drained away through several new ditches. The exhilaration and hope which marked the simultaneous endings of the Second World War and of *The Prime of Life,* were mauled in the political riot of postwar France, in the debasement of the Algerian war, in the discarding of liberty with which Beauvoir equates de Gaulle's return to power. Alienation from her own people through these angers coincides with an alienation from herself, a loathing of "decrepitude." Beauvoir's experiences, held together before by strength, end in a miscellany as tiring to her as to the reader.

This enervation is pronounced in what has been a recurrent subject for her, travel. As a child, spending her summers in the country, Beauvoir formed the conception that the world lay waiting for her, unconscious, uncomprehended. As a young woman, she was free at last to undertake its systematic awakening—in the course of walking tours that seem more penitential than explorative, inflicted upon the walkers and the ground itself. (Sartre paused in these exercises only to adjust his rucksack and to ponder the philosophical implications of tourism.) Every step, then, every glance, was a claim—"And the countryside was something much more than just a setting: they were conquering it bit by bit, by main force" (*The Mandarins*).

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In the new book, places (Spain, Italy, Yugoslavia, Africa, Cuba, Brazil) are still digested, but the peristaltic rhythm is that of a mature constitution, settled in its diet. In the rich quarters, richness is deplored; in the poor quarters, poverty is deplored. Museums and native rites are surveyed, the masses are mingled with. (Acutely conscious of separation from others, Beauvoir enjoys being swirled about in a crowd.) The local dishes are tasted, the local intellectuals pass or fail, a few folk artifacts are purchased. Since the stock of the never-seen-before is running low, the better places are revisited and pressed into lyrical service. Rome, as always, is the favorite for alien apostrophes.

A KIND of global contact has served as an approach to the problem of personal isolation. As a child, Mlle. de Beauvoir overheard her parents' aloof analysis of her and of her sister. Mother asked Father which he preferred. He was a connoisseur: "Simone is more serious-minded, but Poupette is so affectionate. . . ." (In Beauvoir's novel *All Men Are Mortal,* a father's first answer to the same question is made somewhat more palatable: "I don't know. I like both of them equally." But then, *this* father proves to be lying, he likes neither child. Later, Beauvoir herself totes up sums of emotion: "I didn't really know how much he meant to me: a little, a lot, or even more?") The two children are separate, both are separate from their parents; the city, the country, the world are multiplications of solitary units, sometimes grazing each other. Animals are a bore (their failure to *think* about the pain and death they feel, erases ambiguity from their lives), but the separate human units are fascinating. They always rouse curiosity, perhaps most when they are not known. Then they can be observed, and overheard, with detachment. France has lent itself particularly well to this study, since the same people return, for periods of time, to the same cafés:

> We still took a keen interest in those stunning or seductive creatures who came to the Flore in search of a future: we watched their gambits and speculated on their past lives and weighed up their chances. Public and national disasters had not diminished the interest we took in individual human beings.

But this diversion was an adult scratching of what had by then formed a scar. In the *Memoirs* the gradual realization that a full consciousness, a "rational awareness" like one's own, existed within each person, was appalling, "as shocking and unacceptable a fact as death." Beauvoir's solution was to achieve a superior, even a pre-eminent consciousness, and with it a freedom from all lesser ones. By twenty, she had succeeded in building the illusion, as she mocks it later, of being the "One and Only."

The second and third books of her autobiography are essentially the history of her losing this illusion. And, in fact, the molting of illusion is a repeated experience. Yet the sensation of disillusionment, commonly felt to be painful if salubrious, and, felt too often, accreting for many into bitterness, is in Beauvoir natural and almost blithe. She found it regrettable in Camus that, unlike her, he could not muster "the strength to rid himself of his old dreams"; this weakness turned him, Sartre said, into "the empty affirmation of an ideal." Beauvoir's own history is a parade of good riddances. (Once she regrets a concomitant lessening of her "pride and intransigence," but their diminution is not yet really conspicuous.) She will usually say, that was our mistake in that period. For its time, it wasn't an unintelligent or altogether ignoble way of thinking. It was happiness to be exuberantly wrong in the 30's, but it is just as much happiness now to be judiciously right. Worn-out notions are not missed; they mean very little once they are gone:

> Yet I did not regret those days of peace and ignorance. I was too enamored of truth ever to mourn lost illusions, and such insipid ones at that.

Truth is naturally a source of gratification. But error is useful since in time it furnishes the material of metamorphosis into truth. This is looking backward, though—what if one is living in present error? No reason to panic: the brave and the brusque realize that this year's error changes into next year's truth, like the ingenuous lamb into the sagacious sheep.

Her original concept of the efficacy of writing is replaced for Beauvoir, as for Sartre, by the acceptance of inefficacy. Sartre had once looked upon writing as a second religion ("the penman appeared, an *ersatz* of the Christian that I was unable to be"). Beauvoir once thought of it as a means of saving others. The expression of herself was to help the less articulate, just as, beginning to teach, she looked down on "forty adolescent girls in whose minds I had to try to establish my own methods of thinking." Writing narrowed during the Occupation to a means of French self-preservation, "the most important possible activity imaginable." But in the course of opposing the Algerian war and the revenant de Gaulle, the stubbornness of the audience was felt more and more as an inhibitive force. There began to seem, too, less reason, or less right, to publish while "two-thirds of mankind are hungry." Though Beauvoir has, obviously, continued to write, it is partly now in order to explain how futile it is to write. The old ambition to "help others" has come to seem another of those lost egoistic illusions; the final view of writing as the satisfaction of nothing more (as she seems to put it) than creative impulse, rises to egoistic honesty.

But to be forced, as a result, to say as she does

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now, that only her emotions have furnished "the experience of fulfillment" is to divide herself into categories, another wry turn. For Beauvoir, to be "enamored of truth" has been to be enamored of wholeness: the two have been interwoven principles. She has been dedicated to the reunion of things which tend to break apart: her first word of rebuke is "Manichaean" (her second, "narcissistic"). An early piece of writing employed a reliable solution: it was "a long dialogue between two voices, both of which were mine." Another "contrived to set down that split between two halves of the self which is the very essence of dishonesty." Philosophy seemed a way "to seize the essence, the root, the *totality* of things." The Marquis de Sade was welcome not as author or as sexual aberrant, but "by virtue of the *relationship* which he created between these two aspects of himself." Beauvoir's fictions, as her bony exegesis of their themes makes clear, have also been efforts to encircle vagrant points of view. But less satisfactory than philosophy, since fiction in turn creates subdivisions. In the novel, Beauvoir recognizes in theory the importance of being undecided: her essays convey her "intellectual certitudes" but in her novels, she reports, "I set great store by nuances and ambiguities." (These are filed under Fiction, Ingredients of.) Beginning work on *The Mandarins,* she hoped in defiance of the innate partiality of the novel to "tell all." But that intention had to be postponed until the autobiography. Again she had been frustrated by the necessity of narrative *form,* which divides reality into parts, ignoring some, magnifying others:

> In an autobiography, on the other hand, events retain all the complications that marked their original occurrence; this fidelity to real life conveys better than even the most skillful transposition how things really happen to people.

Imaginative forms are based upon an infidelity to the true, the whole, and the real—or rather, upon an abuse of them. "Fiction is built only by *pulverizing*" its sources. Real things, falling into the trap of the novel, are "refracted, diluted, hammered thin, blown up, mixed, transposed, twisted, sometimes completely reversed, and in every case re-created." After such carnage, it is hard to think quickly again in terms of creation or re-creation. And, in fact, Beauvoir finds this violent mutation between historical circumstance and fable, distasteful. As she tries to write it, she defends a literature (merging with total recall) which manipulates as little as possible the interplay and occasional union of human beings and things. Dos Passos was therefore a joy after Mallarmé, Gide, Proust. But Nathalie Sarraute is a sorrow: she prefers "interiority" to the meeting with all external reality, and so is a "schizophrenic" novelist. When, in her preface to *Force of Circumstance,* Beauvoir calls the book "my life" and declines (with what seems at the moment a puzzling ill-temper) the term "work of art," she is arguing again that artful choice is a disruptive and divisive agent.

As a child, she had similar trouble, as Sartre did, in accepting the division between words and what they stood for. Even with adult rational acceptance of the separation between the thing and its symbol, the related trouble remained of either receiving sensation or taking action except by route of word. Until an attitude toward a thing can be stated, the thing does not quite exist. Beauvoir and Sartre stand in front of the Greek temples at Paestum. They have not seen Greek temples before, and neither knows what to say. So the sensation they think these temples might provide, is suspended. Only when, with more temples, comments frame themselves for utterance, can pleasure fall. Living for Beauvoir is almost indistinguishable from its written record. Reactions to objects or to places are completed by being printed: the publication of the impressions she drew from two trips to this country, in *America Day by Day,* seems to fix them, like mounted insects, as permanent judgments.

But action, taken through words, is less definitive than reaction. Each crisis in society or politics is met by written statement. The responsibility of the citizen in these exertions is virtuous, but it involves a risk to the writer. The more closely action is merged with words, the less consideration is given the words in themselves and the more exorbitant the demand made upon them. The best words might not have won the suit, far less than the best have lost it: the writer turns on her mode of action. The words seem suspect, treacherous. They sicken their owner, like a car that stalls on the race to the hospital. Beauvoir is tempted not to read or to write anymore; she complains of a "tetanus of the imagination," and employs music for a time as therapy. But the habit is too strong: she continues to write, to make use of the unfaithful but accustomed object.

Finding a deplorable situation, she joins words into structures of offensive action, like tanks rolling across the hedges of the enemy. "I demolished certain sophistries." "I am not interested in making appeals to people's better natures when I think I've got truth on my side." But apart from forensic or practical causes, writing has to make such an appeal, not to "better" natures, but to that facet of human nature which is reached and held by talent. Even when Sartre states his disenchantment with language, his sentences exist as sentences. But certitudes alone do not sustain Mlle. de Beauvoir. Once again, her rather gallant but crude attempt to force a union is thwarted. The words, dissatisfied, secede from government by sheer insistence.

MARY ELLMANN's *essay, "Academic Women," appeared in the March 1965 issue of* COMMENTARY.

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UPROOTEDNESS

Jervis Anderson

I'VE ALWAYS HAD a feeling for uprooted people; people making it, somehow, amid circumstances and rhythms of life different and distant from those in which they were raised. It probably started quite early. I was raised myself, until I was nine, in an obscure little village in the northwest of Jamaica called Chatham. It lay some twenty miles east of the lush tourist town of Montego Bay. People in Chatham still cooked over firewood in outdoor kitchens and bathed in large zinc pans and wooden tubs in outdoor bathrooms. There was a central watertank and a central standpipe for everyone who did not have a tank in his own backyard. There were no streetlights, of course; wandering fireflies flashing on and off, and dark shapes walking with kerosene lamps to outdoor latrines or putting occasional matches to their smokes in the village square, provided the only illumination in the black, cool face of the night. There were a few shops and houses lining both sides of a worn macadam road, and a post office, which was open two days a week, and there was a church, the Baptist church. Without the church there would scarcely have been any society in Chatham worth speaking of. A large white building, the only one that did not seem dominated by the dense green landscape, the church provided what little there was of a social and moral center to the villagers' lives.

The preacher there was an Englishman. He was the only white man in Chatham; for all I knew he was the only one for miles around. He was short, slight of build, white-haired with years of hot sunlight dunned into his flaming skin.

What was there in our little place of darkness—for such it must have been compared with his England—to keep him going? Nothing but the church. But, thinking of him even now, I wonder how religion could have nurtured anything fresh in his soul when all its secrets were, by then, so trite and open to him; and when, moreover, it must have required rigors of concentration for him to go on Sunday after Sunday nurturing something exciting in ours. Yet, he never seemed defeated by the place, never seemed to want to go home. Perhaps he grew to like it there; the personal isolation, the cultural desolation. Perhaps he was, at that, a kind of Kurtz—less susceptible, less demonic than Conrad's man, maybe, but still carrying that seed of madness which is buried in all those who, at one time or another, in one far place or another, imagine some irresistible call to take up the "white man's burden." In any event, it didn't seem to me (a boy of nine and bearing the gravid romantic imagination of my years) that any pleasure of fulfillment whatever could be found by him in exile. Whether it mattered any more to our little parson or not, it worried me to think that the life of England, that mysterious cultural feast of civilization at which he had been nourished, was lost to him for good.

In retrospect, one might say that this was a cruel trick the colonial passions and appetites of his country had played on him. England had prospered scandalously, vulgarly, from her imperial cause; yet from her obscure workers in the foreign vineyards, men such as the Rev. Alfred Miller, who lived and expired almost totally cut off from their own native ground, the "civilizing" mission abroad must have exacted an incalculable toll.

I was much too young to feel then that Rev. Miller and I were, in a certain sense, not so different after all. I, too, after all, was serving out an exile. I, too, could never, after all the centuries here, go home again. And from me, too, by way of my forebears who had worked the sugar fields for nothing, the civilizing mission had exacted an incalculable toll. How incredible, or ironic, or both, that, entering the mill of history from different ends, we should, in this very special sense, have come out bearing much the same stamp; or, again, that starting out from different continents we should both have been washed by the same current of affairs upon the same shore: to renounce together, suffer together, grope together, adapt together, and, somehow, make it together.

MY EXPERIENCE of living in America these past six years might well have been more maddening had I not been raised in a culture that was not only free, largely, from the explosive passions of race but also full of its share of ambiguous, uprooted, and strange situations. Take that old Englishman again. Aside from everything else, it was of some significance that he was the first white man I ever saw. I may have thought a lot about him, but I was not shocked by his presence; he was a part of the landscape upon which I had opened my eyes. Judging from their behavior, he was even less of an anomaly to the others in the village. Every Sunday he seemed to grow older and weaker in the pulpit, but they paid his salary without a murmur; they washed and polished his old Dodge car; they fixed his little house on the hill when the walls or the floorboards broke or when the roof let in water; and every week or two, they gave him the best fruits of their fields and small farms.

Though most of them were very simple people leading very simple lives, I doubt that they were acting under the spell of his color. "White," so far as my memory goes, was, in any racial sense, unheard of in their vocabulary. They called him "Minister," "Reverend," "Parson Miller," or "Missa Miller." With apologies where they are appropriate, I think he was the most invisible white man I've ever seen. The fact that he was also the first has made a difference.

When I was nine I left Chatham to live in Falmouth, an old seaport town some ten miles away.

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I went to grammar school there until I was sixteen, when I moved again, this time to Kingston, the chief city, to go to high school. Perhaps most of the attitudes I took away from Jamaica were formed in Falmouth. For me, given by now to excessive introspection, there was a lot in Falmouth to reflect upon. I had to understand, for instance, why a little black boy of African origin and Jamaican birth was living in a place called Falmouth, named very deliberately after another place in the South of England. I had to understand what those old cannons were doing there, looking out over the edge of the sea, impotent and obsolete with rust and years, but seemingly still formidable. And I had to understand why my own black grammar school master whipped us with so much enthusiasm through rehearsals for Empire Day, and why, when the day finally came, he, fairly shining in white gaberdine as well as devotion to something far beyond the sea, conducted us, with feeling, through anthems like: *Rule Britannia; . . . Britons never, never shall be slaves.* We, who had just finished being slaves. Britannia's slaves, at that. The answers to all these questions, of course, were to be found in the same place: our career through slavery and imperialism.

However, I failed to see these answers at the time. It was only in looking back on my old schoolmaster, for instance, that I noticed his acquiescence, his silence about the imperial condition. It is difficult sometimes to say which silence is more frightening: the one produced by indifference, the one produced by cowardice, or the one produced by a combination of innocence and indoctrination. My schoolmaster's silence seems to me now to have come out of the last, and it is frightening enough. It is also sad. Without knowing it, he was failing many lives. Falmouth may have been urban in facilities, but it was still provincial in imagination; and in a rural town (which is really the best description for it) teachers are next only to preachers as exemplars of intelligence and framers of moral values. My own teacher, whether he knew it or not, had become simply one of the agents in preserving an untenable condition. This was no individual accident. The British themselves had seen to it that all our schoolmasters were well-trained in the moral style of the status quo—a fervor of acquiescence that made dissent from genteel practice seem disloyal, heretical, and, worst of all, ungentlemanly. One did not let the side down; no matter if it were the other side.

And yet I can hardly despise him. He was a good teacher; and, as best as he knew how, he was a good man. He was a victim, simply, of that received ideology under whose spell more than half of the Jamaican bourgeoisie at that time, perhaps even now, imagined themselves to be expatriate black Englishmen. I am even tempted to say he embodied a time and a mood whose passing many of us may well secretly miss: a time, certainly, when at much less moral cost one could stay outside involvement. I am reminded of this today when so many of us must take stands or choose sides on all the questions that invade and peck at the conscience of our age. I know one comfort I had then which I do not have now. I never had to put to myself the troubling question of home: Where, really, it was—here, among the ambiguous faces of the West, the only faces I have ever known; or there, in Africa, where the faces have the certainty of my own, but are faces I have never known and in which I can never hope to find my own image again.

As IN ALMOST every town in Jamaica, there were families in Falmouth from different parts of the world. The ones that interested me most were the Whitesides, the Wizes, the Chin Sees, and the Delgados. They were all people who, in one sense or another, had chosen, or been driven into, exile; and if no one could be sure that they enjoyed it, they, at least, seemed resigned to it.

The Whitesides came from America. They were the only Americans in town. He was Bill and she was Maggie. They looked well-fed and well-tanned. They were rich. A boy felt they had to be, considering where they came from; it wasn't a part of my understanding until much later on that there were Americans who were not rich. Anyway, the Whitesides had what to show for it: the big stone house, the servants, the three motor cars, the large shipping pier. Moreover, befitting their possessions and their national origin, they gave off the easy, brassy confidence of people who had some mystic faith in action and who were free of the ambivalences and uncertainties I now saw in most other people. For the Whitesides there could scarcely have been any worthwhile questions of existence beyond those which could be answered by picking up the telephone and calling the bank.

One day, however, Bill went shooting baldpates and was brought home dead from a heart attack. The obituaries said he came from Nebraska. Today, when I hear of Nebraska, I think of Ted Sorenson and Willa Cather, but in those days I didn't even know where to look for it on the map. I wondered, though, whether there were still strains of his family up there somewhere in Nebraska who were unaware that in some far place an intimate tie to their own past and place had just been sundered.

The Wizes were refugees from Czechoslovakia. Mrs. Wize was an attractive middle-aged woman with graying hair hanging loosely, a ripe body, and a broad open smile. But it was Dr. Wize whom you noticed. He was stubby, with a short neck pulled into his shoulders like a turtle. He had a high forehead, shiny and gnomish; and eyes which, from behind a pair of ascetic-looking glasses, seemed to know everything. The Wizes

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spent most of their time at home. The rumor went that Dr. Wize was a very ingenious man who could and did make unheard-of things. But since I never found anyone who had seen one of his inventions, I wondered whether he smuggled them out in the dead of night. Since it was wartime, the image of Dr. Wize was spiced with a flavor of espionage. He always seemed to be hurrying to the post office, or hurrying home from it. Apart from all of their self-mystification, though, everybody agreed it was a shame that a man with Dr. Wize's intelligence had to waste it so far from home. For in our town no need had arisen yet for an intellect quite so esoteric.

The Chin Sees ran the biggest wholesale business in town. There seemed to be an inexhaustible mother lode of Chin Sees, for every time a Chin See died in Falmouth a fresh one came out from China. Their house was the social hub of the Chinese community. When they celebrated Double Ten, one of their major holidays, the other Chinese gathered at the Chin Sees's house for all manner of wild festivities, featuring firecrackers and orgies of gambling. Sometimes we would hear that a whole grocery store had changed hands on one roll of the Chinese dice; and a few weeks later when we went to buy bread or condensed milk or mackerel, there, indeed, would be "Hoghead Fatman" running "Willie Madman's" shop.

The Delgados were of Jewish ancestry. They were a large clan who lived in two stately houses overlooking the sea. The leading family in Falmouth, the Delgados owned the best property, the biggest retail haberdashery, the best motor cars, the finest launches, gave most to charity, provided most employment, and threw the fanciest parties of an evening. They were also the main pillar of the local Episcopalian Church, where, like English squires, they had their own pews. All of which seemed quite natural to me, since I had still to learn of another religion called Judaism, and of the strong pull it exerted on those it had mothered.

AT SIXTEEN, I left all these faces behind. I went to Kingston to enter high school and finish growing up. After high school I went to work for *The Daily Gleaner*, the only morning paper on the island, as a copy editor and cub reporter. There wasn't much new about Jamaican life to learn in Kingston; the city merely reinforced all the impressions I had formed before. In Kingston there was more of everything than I had ever seen in Chatham and Falmouth except, perhaps, watertanks, outhouses, bushes, and fireflies. Everything there was smarter, sharper, and more sophisticated. And I, too, at first flattered and self-satisfied, became a little smarter, a little sharper, and a little more sophisticated.

Most of the people I came to know were black. But Kingston was the home, equally, of Anglo-Saxons, Jews, Chinese, Syrians, East Indians, and other Asiatics, who were freely and thoroughly intermixed in the life of the city, though concentrated in certain areas of it. Many of the East Indians had grown rich through operating the more exclusive bazaars. The Chinese owned almost all the grocery stores, and perhaps half of the wholesale trade, but they were also prominent in law, medicine, sports, and society. The Anglo-Saxons, though sometimes without visible means of support, maintained the style of a leisure class. The Syrians, who confined their interests to the drygoods trade, were powerful financially. The Jews contributed important investors, promoters, lawyers, corporation executives, as well as some of the more influential figures behind the deceptively plebeian screen of party politics. Every now and then their hidden political power came out in the open, just as Sir Neville Ashenheim recently emerged from the inner councils of Sir Alexander Bustamante's conservative Labor party to become Jamaica's first ambassador to Washington: perhaps the only Jew representing a predominantly black country in international affairs. The blacks, of course, were in everything: business, law, government, education, journalism.

It was interesting, rich, and varied, but after about four years on *The Gleaner*, I became restless. *The Gleaner* is a great power in Jamaica, and if you work there it is very easy for you to trade on that power. But it is also very easy to become intellectually undernourished. I found that there was little that happened in a city room to replenish the energies of mind and spirit it required merely to fill its narrow, shallow, but endless channel of information. Then, too, most of my high-school friends had gone away to Oxford, London, McGill, Edinburgh, Columbia, NYU, Howard. What was left for me to do in Kingston? Get married, and become a hack? I do not mean to suggest that everybody in Jamaican journalism was a hack. Theodore Sealy, the first black man to edit *The Gleaner*, was a brilliant writer and one of the most vigorous minds in the country. Peter Abrahams, of South Africa, and Vic Reid, a native, edited weeklies. But the latter two had already made it as novelists and needed to give to their newspaper work, or so it seemed, only the practical and routine side of themselves—left over from their private ecstasies of creation.

And so I put my things together, and came to New York to attend college.

ON THE flight from Kingston I found myself sitting beside a white man. He turned out to be the only one in our compartment. I hadn't noticed him when I took my seat; otherwise, I might have sat elsewhere. My reluctance had nothing to do with his skin; it concerned his clothes. One of the mental habits the colonial rulers imparted to our upstart middle class was an incredible regard for the mere facts of appearance: if clothes did not

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entirely make the man, they did, infallibly, classify him. This man, my neighbor, had on a dirty, rumpled khaki shirt and shorts; army stockings rolled to his ankles; and heavy mud-stained boots. He was hardly the sort of traveler I expected to see on a flight to New York. This being my first flight, perhaps I should have been prepared for unexpected experiences, but I already knew enough to realize that my own black Jamaicans might have been reluctant to let me on the plane if I had been dressed as he was. He was reading a magazine called *The Cricketer*, which I knew and often read, since I played a fair game myself. He had not taken his eyes from it since I started my surreptitious and somewhat disgruntled inspection of him. Struck, finally, by what seemed to me his loneliness, I leaned toward him and asked "Do you play?"

Cricket may well be one of the significant reasons for the adhesiveness and continuance of the British Commonwealth; indeed, along with the Bible, and perhaps the gun, it must, in the early days of Empire, have aided considerably in tightening the noose of servitude. In a very short time, and on no stronger attachment than our shared knowledge of the game, my neighbor and I were chatting with the ease of old acquaintances. My first surprise was that he spoke so well. His conversation was fluent and charming, often punctuated by gestures that were both so relaxed and controlled, it was hard to tell whether they derived from genteel breeding or natural style. It turned out he came from Leeds; that he had been living in the United States for some time; that he was on his way back from a field trip to some remote Caribbean island I had never heard of; and that he was a professor of anthropology at one of the major American universities (possibly it was Princeton). Meanwhile, a sort of paralysis had come over me; there was nothing I could say now which, even while I was considering it, did not seem trivial. Struggling to master, or better conceal, the collapse of my own fantasies, I slowly looked him over again; and without daring then to look at my own self, I felt awkward and clumsy in my new tweed suit, choking necktie, glistening cuff-links, and fancy English shoes.

Might he not have been allowing himself a small, silent chuckle at my expense? Here was I trapped within the standards of respectability and worth that his people had taught me, while he retained the privilege of escaping them whenever he wished, of seeing through their hypocrisy and meaninglessness. By the time I left the plane at Idlewild, I was still filled with the feeling that even if this place, this strange place, was somehow the place for all of us, the time, this infuriating time, was still the time of those who were white.

NOBODY anymore comes to America quite innocent. Especially if he is black, he has some idea of the experience that awaits him here. And I hadn't been here a good thirty minutes before *my* experience began. I was still at Idlewild; still filled with the excitement of a new adventure; still overpowered by the bigness and the brightness of the place. All my defenses were down. Loaded with suitcases, I was trying to figure out which direction to go, when a customs officer barked, "Hey, boy, this way." "Me?" "Yes, you." Well, what can I say? It is a moment when any vein running with self-esteem wants to burst. God, I thought, not so soon! And not here! The very gateway of the country! And yet, if it was to be, if it was to start, what better time than then, what better place than there? I ached to avenge a hurt, to assert a pride. But what was there to do, or what was there to say? I certainly could not rap him in the mouth, though I would have enjoyed nothing better. And I have no gifts whatever for repartee. I just stared into his eyes, his cold, murderous eyes. And he stared back into mine, mixing murder with mockery. His eyes were clearly saying: *No matter what, baby, you can't win.* When he was finished fishing through my bags, I picked them up and walked away, but never before had I walked away from anyone (unless it was my father at the height of his hegemony) feeling quite so futile.

If this was to be my welcome, with its own incontrovertible character, I quickly took some of its meaning to be that as I went out into the country I would do well to arm myself with caution; that here I would have neither power, nor a say, nor love, nor certainty, nor, perhaps, help for pain. This melting pot was different from the one I had left. Mine, strangely, had been cool, and had smelted only to blend. This one, it seemed, was hot and smelted only to isolate.

MY intuition about American society has not needed to be modified very much in the subsequent six years I have spent in New York. To the nativist I have been a "foreigner"; to the majority of whites, however clean or careful their public rhetoric, I have been a "nigger"; and to the majority of American blacks I have been a "West Indian." Each of these images has carried its special odium; each has entailed its special burden; each has created its special chasm.

There have been times, in fact, when I have not been able to say which chasm was greater. At such times nothing has remained but an optimism wrenched with pain, a feeling that my experience in Jamaica could not have been for nothing, that I had sensed in it a kind of truth, and that somehow, this truth could be found here too. However, there were also other times; far fewer, but sweet with hope and vindication. They were the times when hands unexpectedly reached across the gulf of difference and touched mine. Moved by these experiences, I could feel that I was not wholly a fool to hope for sensible relationships, I could even believe with Ralph Ellison that: "In the

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end, when the barriers are down, there are human assertions to be made, whatever one's race, in terms of one's own taste, and one's own affirmations of one's own self, one's own way and sense of life. . . ."

Still, because these moments were so few, because they gave a glimpse into possibilities of connection that were otherwise so far from being recognized, much less taken for granted, they tended only to sharpen my misery. So that, these moments of light notwithstanding, and my native memories notwithstanding, I, too, learned here what it is to rage inwardly at the barriers of ignorance and vanity which do not go down and which make my own human assertions seem either futile or dangerous or absurd.

Some thirteen years ago, in his famous letter to Sartre, Albert Camus said that he wished to speak "in the name of that poverty that finds hundreds of advocates, but not a single brother." Something similar, I think, may be said, here in the "new world," for what we keep referring to as our "common humanity." It has had so many advocates, and so few brothers. And yet, I cannot think of any other place where the need for brothers is greater than here. Having created everything else, almost, we have not created community and thus cannot understand why our fulfillment does not come. All frightened, estranged, and uprooted people—the kind of people that most Americans are—share an experience in loneliness. But loneliness, I think, has its blessings; one of which is that it helps to clear the mind for insight. And the insight for now is plainly that only through the risking of a certain secret strength which the uprooted develop—whether in the darkness of a village like Chatham, in the polyglot diversity of a city like Kingston, or in the isolation chambers of New York—can we hope to be saved or, if nothing else, soothed.

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* * *

THE SPY OF GOD

Léon Poliakov

TO BECOME, after his death, the most unlikely hero of a controversial play and to owe his official rehabilitation in his own country mostly to a passionate debate over the memory of Pius XII: such has been the posthumous fate of Kurt Gerstein, the "Spy of God"—a fate as outrageously improbable as his life, as Rolf Hochhuth's play, and indeed as the whole madhouse that was Hitler's Germany.

Kurt Gerstein, born in 1905 in Westphalia, belonged to an old Prussian family famous for its piety and sense of duty—or, more accurately, its *Pflichtgefühl,* that untranslatable virtue of a vanished Germany. The son of a high magistrate, young Gerstein chose to be a mining engineer. While still a student he ran the local branch of the YMCA, and by 1932 he was an official of the national organization, in charge of its advanced program of Biblical studies. Pictures of him during this period reveal a slender, blond young man with a long face and chiseled features. In the Third Reich such an appearance was the equivalent of a pedigree, and it no doubt eased his entry into, and subsequent career in, the SS.

IN 1933 Gerstein was a staunch supporter of the Nazi party and was swept along for a time in the euphoria that took hold of Germans of all classes, ages, and beliefs. Unlike most of his fellow citizens, however, Gerstein, a Lutheran, grew disillusioned once he became fully aware of the implacable struggle that the Nazis were waging against the Christian churches. With his typical initiative and energy, he took to distributing anti-Nazi leaflets and made speeches against the Godless propaganda of the party. In 1935 he was the victim of a public beating; a year later, and again in 1938, he was interned in a concentration camp. Meanwhile he had lost his government job as a mining engineer, and was studying medicine. This change was also to influence the course of his later career.

On the first of September 1939, the same day that war was declared, Hitler decided to put to death the mentally defective and deranged as a useless burden to the *Staat* and its *Volk.* The Führer's "euthanasia program"—perhaps an even more fundamental expression of Nazi ideology than the subsequent murder of the Jews and gypsies—was shrouded in secrecy, but it inevitably became common knowledge once sufficient progress had been made in emptying the asylums. One of the first victims happened to be Gerstein's sister-in-law. It was at this point that he decided to join the SS, in order, as he put it, "to see, to see clearly into its workings and then to proclaim them to the world!" No one sent him on this spying mission; in fact, officials and members of his church disapproved of it.

Gerstein explains himself as follows in his autobiography, written in May 1945:

> Even if my life were in danger I had no scruples about it: I had been caught out twice myself by Gestapo agents who had infiltrated into the church's most exclusive circles and who had prayed at my very side. I thought to myself: "Anything you can do I can do better," so I volunteered for the SS. The fact that my sister-in-law, Berthe Eberling, had been put to death at Hadamar was an added incentive. I was introduced by the two Gestapo agents who had dealt with my case and I was accepted without any difficulty. One SS man said to me: "An

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idealist like you should make a fanatical party member. . . ."

By now a doctor as well as an engineer, Gerstein was attached to the hygiene service of the SS. He soon made a name for himself as "something of a technical genius," he tells us, by perfecting a system for disinfecting and delousing troops in the field and prisoners of war. In the German army, fumigation was carried out with the help of a gas called "Zyklon B." One day, in the summer of 1942, Gerstein received top-secret orders to deliver a cargo of this gas to a "prisoner-of-war camp" in Poland. Having joined the SS to learn the truth about euthanasia of deranged Germans, Gerstein arrived at the camp at Belzec to witness a mass annihilation of Polish Jews.

Immediately upon his return to Germany, Gerstein began to search for a way to let the world know the atrocious truth. The scene described in *The Deputy* is not quite exact; in Berlin he was not received by the nuncio Orsenigo; he visited the legation in civilian dress, rather than in uniform, and once he presented his credentials he was asked to leave. Hochhuth's scene is accurate, however, in a deeper sense, since Gerstein's rebuff as he describes it in his confession (this part was first made public in 1964) anticipates the main theme of the play:

> My attempt to report all this to the Holy Father's chief delegate was without success. They asked me if I were a soldier. Then they refused me audience and asked me to leave the legation of his Holiness right away. I tell this to show how extremely difficult it was even for a German who was desperately hostile to the Nazis to expose the criminality of their leaders. What could be expected of an ordinary citizen if Christ's deputy on earth himself refused to hear me, even though tens of thousands of people were being slaughtered each day and a delay of mere hours seemed to me criminal? Even the nuncio in Germany refused to be informed of this monstrous violation of Jesus's commandment: "Love thy brother as thyself. . . ."

We know about this episode only from Gerstein's own account, but his further efforts to alert the world are confirmed by various witnesses. The most impressive testimony is that of Baron Gorran von Otter, presently Swedish ambassador in London, who was then with the Swedish embassy in Berlin. Gerstein met von Otter on the train from Warsaw to Berlin when he was returning from his macabre mission. They talked all through the night, Gerstein relating what he had seen at Belzec as well as his secret reasons for being in the SS. As von Otter puts it: "From the very beginning, as Gerstein described these atrocities, weeping and broken-voiced, I had no doubts as to the sincerity of his humanitarian intentions. . . . He was firmly convinced that as soon as they learned the facts about these exterminations and the facts were confirmed by unbiased outsiders, the German people would not tolerate Nazi rule a day longer." Von Otter conscientiously communicated Gerstein's information to Stockholm but the matter seems to have ended there, and it was not until Germany's surrender in August 1945 that the Swedish government passed on these details to the Allies. By 1942-1943, as we know, the chancelleries of Europe were not lacking in information about events at Auschwitz and elsewhere. As long as the war continued, however, no neutral government and no "unbiased" authority dared announce the horrible truth to the world because of fear of Nazi Germany. The sheer incredibility of the facts also contributed to the silence. The resistance movement in the Netherlands, for example, refused to transmit Gerstein's message to London because "they should not tell things to the world that nobody could believe."

Gerstein's efforts remained fruitless until the end. At one point he attempted to sabotage extermination operations by pretending that certain deliveries of the Zyklon B entrusted to him had been lost or spoiled. To carry out this deception, he had the contractors make out the invoices to him so that when he destroyed the shipments he could also destroy any incriminating evidence. From his point of view, and ours, this sabotage prevented him from becoming an accomplice to murder, but it is impossible to say whether it enabled him to save any lives. The production of Zyklon B gas is not very complicated and it is unlikely that the chief supplier—the firm of Degesch in Frankfurt—ever suffered any shortage of the basic materials. What we do know is that once Gerstein was placed in charge of production of the gas, he did have the formula modified to eliminate a special ingredient that made the victims' death particularly painful.

IT IS NOT difficult to find witnesses—particularly among Lutheran pastors—to whom Gerstein confided his activities and expectations while he continued to serve in the SS. Yet the character of his life during his final three years as a "spy of God" is by no means clear. Every confidence he made, even to his wife or his father, constituted a mortal danger and so none of these confidences was ever complete. Moreover, the testimony we have about him is sharply contradictory. Some observers describe him as a broken man, apparently horrified by his inescapable complicity in a situation which he had freely chosen; to others he was simply an SS hack; and to still others, a man who trusted in the future, who was confident of the downfall of the Third Reich and hoped to serve as a star witness in the trials that would inevitably follow.

Here is an extract from a letter written in March 1944 to his father, the old Prussian magistrate, which provides us with some indication of Gerstein's state of mind.

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Dear Father,

I'm taking the opportunity of a Sunday evening alone to write you a long-owed letter. In principle, unlike previously, I don't write letters any more.

I often think of the mill on your desk with our name inscribed on it; *Gerechtigkeit* [Justice], *Ehrenhaftigkeit* [Honorableness], *Ruhe* [Equanimity], *Sicherheit* [Trustworthiness], *Treue* [Loyalty], *Ehrlichkeit* [Honesty], *Innigkeit* [Sincerity].* Are all these only valid for an individual? Are there other values and ends to which they become subordinate and inferior? Do we have the right to abandon justice, this ancient pledge handed down to us? Can we ever depart from love which is said to be the only thing distinguishing us from all other living creatures? Is there some future ahead where these supreme virtues will be systematically crushed underfoot? I don't know what is going on inside you and I'm far from demanding the right to know, but when a man has served the cause of justice during his entire professional life, he must have had some reactions these last few years. I'm still horrified at the words you shouted or rather wrote to me at a very desperate moment in my life when I was struggling with all the vital issues: "hard times require hard methods!"—No. Phrases like that don't make what is happening acceptable to me. I can't believe, confronted with all the indescribable things I have to see, that this is my father's final comment. You should not depart for another world with these words and these thoughts. It seems to me that all of us who still have some time to live, still have the chance to reflect upon the practical possibilities and limits as well as the consequences of this total absence of moral restraint. There are certain self-evident truths. . . . Pride goes before a fall. *Der Krug geht so lange zum Wasser, bis er bricht.*† I could go on quoting proverbs endlessly, but let us leave it here. I don't want to make you any more wretched than necessary. You have lived through a lot and sacrificed a great deal. But, dear father, if we really want to maintain some communication, other than at a most superficial level, we must have a basis of mutual honesty. Otherwise everything gets reduced to small talk. I'm a long way now from my old narrow opinions. I'm aware of ideas and values we can't transgress against, except with the most drastic results. However powerless the isolated individual, and however much he honors prudence as the crowning virtue, he should never give up those ideas and values he cherishes. He can never make excuses to his conscience by saying: that doesn't concern me, I can't do anything about it. *Sileat, sed cogitet mea res agitur* [let him be silent but recognize that something of mine is at stake].

Dear father, there are times when every son has to speak out, even to his father to whom he is indebted for every moral concept and basic notion he has. A day will come when you, too, will be called to account for these times and for what they have produced. We wouldn't understand each other at all or have anything meaningful to say to one another if it were impossible or forbidden for me to say this. Don't underestimate your responsibility and obligation to give account. The day might come sooner than you think. For myself, I have a sense of this obligation and feel consumed by it (*consumor in ea*). But I'll stop there.

With most cordial greetings from your son,

Kurt

We do not have his father's reply, but six months later, after the Allied landings in Normandy, the son wrote as follows:

> . . . Our views are so different that we shall never agree about the reasons for what is now happening. Contrary to what you write, I think any discussion at all is out of the question. What's more, you are wrong on one point. I never lent a hand in any of this. Whenever I received orders I not only didn't carry them out but saw to it that they were disobeyed. For my part I come out of it all with clean hands and a clear conscience. It's very comforting to me. And I didn't act in this way out of cleverness. What does death matter, after all? I did it from principle and a sense of decency. . . .

After the final German defeat, Gerstein returned to Tübingen where his wife and two children were living. He turned himself over to the French occupation authorities and also gave them his autobiography, which has come to be known as the "Gerstein document." He was then transferred to Cherche-Midi, the military prison in Paris. On July 25, 1945, according to the official report, he was found hanged in his cell and the inquest concluded that he had committed suicide.

A NUMBER OF strange facts surround the circumstances of his death. First, the file of the prosecution against him by the military court disappeared. The official report states that it was sent to London in November 1945 and from there transferred to the Polish office of the United Nations Commission on War Crimes, but it has never come to light. There also exists a letter from Gerstein to a Dr. Ubbink, one of his confidants and a member of the Dutch resistance, written from prison during the month that he died. The letter is so full of optimism that one begins to question—as, indeed, does his wife—whether he in fact committed suicide. There is also the possibility that he was killed by his fellow SS prisoners, not an uncommon way of settling accounts in the prisons and camps after the war.

Further, in January of the following year, the international military tribunal in Nuremberg at first rejected the document which contained Gerstein's autobiography, apparently because it had no identification number. The same afternoon, the error was rectified and the document was accepted, but since there was much heated subse-

* The "*N*" is missing from the anagram in the original.
† Literally, "the pitcher goes to the water until it breaks."

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quent debate about Gerstein in Germany, the story that "even the Nuremberg tribunal refused to consider his fantastical lies" received plenty of attention. Gerstein's description of the camp at Belzec, however, remains one of the most harrowing accounts found in the vast literature on genocide, and in 1956, the West German Information Service distributed tens of thousands of copies throughout the country. Since then the name of Gerstein has become synonymous with false witness and betrayal to all the unrepentant SS members who are still to be found throughout Europe.

Finally, in 1949, there was a hearing for Gerstein before the de-Nazification Council (*"Spruchkammer"*) of Tübingen. The council refused to rehabilitate him posthumously and instead classified him as a "petty Nazi." Why this verdict? There was no question of Gerstein's sincerity. Dozens of witnesses, among them such well-known figures as the Protestant Bishop Dibelius and Pastor Niemöller, came forward to testify to his anti-Nazi convictions and to his fearless behavior. Their statements, however, were often not without a certain amount of ambiguity. Could this be because these witnesses, unlike von Otter and Dr. Ubbink, were neither outsiders nor unbiased? For example, Pastor Niemöller described Gerstein as "a rather special kind of saint." Going even further, Pastor Mochalski said "that he underestimated the SS system and fell prey to it. In this way he became an instrument of the SS plan for extermination when it was precisely this he wished to resist. . . ." In addition, the complete success of Gerstein's dissimulation in 1941 led the tribunal to suspect that his reconversion to Nazism might very well have been genuine and that it was only after his experience of the horrors of Belzec that his eyes were opened again. And most important of all, the tribunal found that once Gerstein had learned of these matters it was his duty to quit the SS, whatever the cost. Their argument on this point is worth quoting at length:

> . . . The fact that he informed prominent members of the Evangelical Church and of the Dutch resistance of the extermination measures being taken and that he begged them to let the world know what he knew, as well as the fact that he rendered two deliveries of prussic acid unusable, can all be said to constitute acts of resistance, for if discovered they would have greatly endangered Gerstein's life. However, this attitude, as well as the fact that he did not act of his own free will but rather under the stress of a situation and of orders whose consequences seemed inevitable in any case, is not sufficient, in the light of the enormity of the crime, to completely absolve him from any responsibility. It can only contribute to the leniency of our decision. One could have expected of Gerstein that after what he went through at the camp in Belzec he would resist, with all his might and main, becoming an instrument of these exterminations. The tribunal is of the opinion that Gerstein did not exhaust every possibility and that he could have found still other ways and means to stand apart from such action. It is neither understandable nor excusable that, as a convinced and devout Christian who had for years adopted a correct and courageous attitude toward the National Socialists, he should consent, a year later, to pass on orders issued to the Degesch company.
>
> He should have understood clearly, especially after what he had gone through, that by himself he was powerless to stop the exterminations or to save even a few lives, simply by spoiling several deliveries of prussic acid.
>
> Therefore this tribunal has dealt lightly with Gerstein in view of certain extenuating circumstances. . . .

The last lines of this decision lead one to wonder whether Gerstein was found guilty for his failure or for his initiative. "It is not necessary to hope in order to begin, or to succeed in order to persevere" (William of Orange). The tribunal seems to condemn Gerstein for what, to our way of thinking, was the real value of his actions. Throughout the entire duration of the war none of the judges or honored witnesses had shown any opposition to the mass exterminations. Gerstein, who at the very least had dared to do so, becomes a prodigious nuisance to them. Thus, post-Hitlerian followed the course of Hitlerian Germany, both being guided by the dictates of a secular German culture in which an order was an order and a sense of duty the foremost of virtues. One of these duties was not to meddle in what did not concern you, even when, as Gerstein's distinguished father put it, "hard times require hard methods."

Can the recent decision by the Württemberg *Land* to rehabilitate Gerstein's reputation be viewed as an indication of the influence of a new generation? It is evident that the scandal revived by Hochhuth's play formed the basis of this reversal, but other "angry young men"—a group of young churchmen and friends of Gerstein—have recently created a memorial in his honor in Westphalia: "Kurt Gerstein House." The repercussions in Germany of this further initiative will perhaps provide a test case of "the new Germany."

LÉON POLIAKOV *is the author of* History of Anti-Semitism, *the first volume of which will soon be published in America by Vanguard. The present essay has been translated from the French by* DEIRDRE WULF.

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STRANGE BEDFELLOWS

EQUALITY AND LIBERTY. By HARRY V. JAFFA. *Oxford University Press. 229 pp. $5.75.*

Reviewed by GEORGE KATEB

EYEBROWS WERE raised last summer when the New York *Times* reported that Harry Jaffa was writing campaign speeches for Barry Goldwater. How could it be that this student of Professor Leo Strauss, this ardent author of a brilliant book on the slavery controversy in the 1850's, this respected teacher of political theory, would lend his intelligence to such a cause? It is bad enough that professors should be partisans; worse that professors of political theory should be partisans. But there must be limits: working for Goldwater—not just for the Republican party, at a decent remove from its temporary leader, but for the leader himself—must surely be beyond reasonable limits. Especially, one would have thought, for somebody like Jaffa. In none of his writing was there anything to prepare his readers for the news of his behavior. His first book was a patient but fully engaged study of St. Thomas's commentary on Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*. Done under the supervision of Prof. Strauss, at the New School, and published in 1952, Jaffa's work dealt with a great confrontation of classical and medieval systems of moral thought. In 1959, Jaffa published his *Crisis of the House Divided*, a splendid analysis of the motives, strategies, ideals, and compromises of Lincoln and Douglas in their debates and activities. The book was marked by a passion for equality; and by a love for Lincoln, because of Lincoln's matchless understanding of equality and of the limits on attaining it. Jaffa set up a genuine dialectic, according justice to Douglas, and then turning on his position the full force of Lincoln's reasoning. In the course of examining the issues of the period, Jaffa transcended the period, and produced a book that could serve as a general introduction to the subject of equality in a democratic society. There is never any doubt as to where his sympathies lie: all in favor of human equality, a total commitment to the opening words of The Declaration of Independence.

HOW THEN do we get to Goldwater? Could it be perversity, or at least subtlety carried so far that it resembles perversity? It is part of the profession of political theory to prize subtlety: to find in texts what others are too lazy or unimaginative to see, to view movements and events with a sense that there are always underlying meanings beyond the reach of everyone but the political theorist. Derivative from this attitude is a tendency to take sides in unpredictable ways, and expend one's ingenuity in continuing defenses of apparently indefensible positions. To bring to bear the full weight of theoretical intelligence on a mundane political matter can thus lead to strange results. In the case of Professor Strauss's students, this tendency is often unusually pronounced. Wielding incomparable pedagogic influence, especially since he moved to the University of Chicago in 1949, Strauss has trained a large number of political theorists "to read between the lines." It is not so much the difficulty or remoteness of political theories that must make reading them, for Strauss, an exegetical art, but rather the assumption that most philosophers have not felt free to speak the truth directly. The history of *political* philosophy in particular is the history of disguised utterance: many thinkers have felt that the truth would get them into trouble with authority or would prove too terrible a burden, too dangerous a disclosure, for the great mass of men. Though Jaffa's work—unlike that of some of Strauss's other stu-

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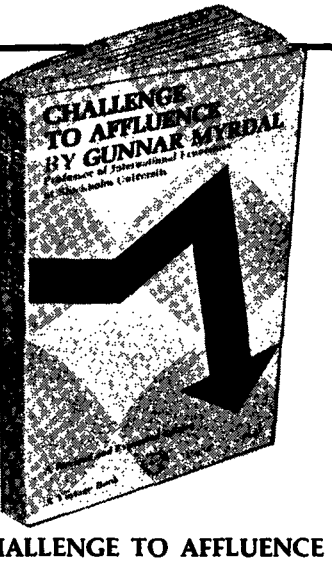

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dents—is free of excessive interpretative ingenuity, could it be that he saw in Goldwater some disguised truth, some real moral point in what otherwise seemed all too clear and all too barren? Did Jaffa treat the Goldwater candidacy in a Straussian manner?

WE TURN to Jaffa's latest book in the hopes of finding an answer, or at least a clue. *Equality and Liberty,* dedicated to Strauss, is a collection of ten articles written over the last seven years, and covering a variety of subjects. All but three of them deal wholly or partly with the issue of slavery and equality, and contribute to the story Jaffa told in *Crisis of the House Divided.* These pieces are of good quality, though better for the striking sentence or passage than for a thoroughly achieved argument. There is, however, not the slightest change in Jaffa's moral temper: his devotion to Lincoln's devotion to equality remains constant. Reading Jaffa on the Emancipation Proclamation, or on the Ohio campaign of 1859 in which Lincoln and Douglas took part, one would have to infer that the writer is a dedicated liberal, that his politics is humane and generous. To be sure, Jaffa stresses the necessity of limits on the will of the majority; he rejects Douglas's doctrine that a majority of settlers in a territory could decide whether or not slavery was to be permitted. A majority cannot use their freedom to deprive a minority of *their* freedom: there are some things even an overwhelming majority are not morally allowed to do. Here Jaffa is defending the orthodox constitutional majoritarian position. Furthermore, Jaffa denies that a democracy can exist without a measure of consensus on certain subjects. Jaffa, in contrast to the super-realists among the political scientists, affirms the need for something like democratic virtue on the part of the citizenry. He goes so far as to say that those not committed to the preservation of the democratic system, those who would use democratic freedom to undermine it or alter it into an authoritarian system—like the Nazis and the Communists—must be denied freedom in the name of freedom. Again, Jaffa does not differ from many liberals who shudder to think that Goldwater carried even six states. There are, of course, liberals farther to the left of Jaffa, on the subject of granting free speech and association to anti-democratic elements. But that fact does not affect Jaffa's basic liberalism. Let it be noted that Jaffa's reasoning, if not sustained through an entire essay, is compelling and sometimes eloquent.

Two of the essays are directed against the scientism Jaffa claims is widespread among his colleagues. One of them, "In Defense of the 'Natural Law Thesis,'" published in 1957, is considered a standard statement of the anti-positivist theory of moral judgments. The affiliation to Leo Strauss is unmistakable. If Strauss has insisted on a characteristic way of reading the texts of political theory, he has also insisted on the correctness of the specific political theory of natural law. Not all human values are either the automatic resultant of cultural conditioning or the arbitrary expression of personal taste. Some are absolutely valid; they are inherent in the order of nature and receive their authenticity from a transcendental source. The aim of the educated intelligence is to achieve, despite the meagerness of human capacities, knowledge of the order of nature and, with it, knowledge of what is good and evil.

THE DOCTRINE of natural law, loaded with numerous philosophical perplexities, has been put to many uses through time, some of them contradictory. Pagans, Christians, Deists; radicals, liberals, reactionaries, have all appealed to natural law to vindicate a given practice or institution. Vagueness inheres in the principle. In Strauss's version of it, there are conservative, indeed illiberal, implications; for Strauss makes much of the circumscriptions that natural law supposedly places on human will, self-assertion, the right of each man to live as he pleases. Virtue, not individualism; conformity to the nature of things, not rights claimed against authority, are prized. What is remarkable is that Jaffa does not follow Strauss's lead; rather he goes back to Jefferson, and holds that the main content of natural law is human equality. Where *The National Review* can use a debased form of a view resembling Strauss's to justify whatever it is that the magazine justifies, Jaffa maintains that natural law is the only true foundation for equality, and that equality is a necessary deduction from natural law. The road to Goldwater is still to seek.

The very first essay of the book, "The Nature and Origin of the American Party System," is the last hope for making the connection. One remembers that Goldwater gave a speech to the American Political Science Association last September; and a clever speech it was. He pleaded with his unfriendly audience to see through the appearances. The two-party system was at stake; forces had to be realigned; by campaigning as he was, he was doing the only possible thing to save the Republican party. Could Jaffa have helped with that speech? In any case, there is no similarity between Goldwater's speech and Jaffa's essay, which is a revision of a paper commissioned by a Republican study group in July, 1959. It is a first-rate summary description of the way in which American parties have served American democracy. But even if one made the most strenuous effort, one could not fit Goldwater into Jaffa's scheme. The Goldwater candidacy does not answer to Jaffa's expectations.

Suppose we were to be generous to Goldwater, at the risk of bad taste and of being charged with the same sort of perversity already mentioned. Exaggerating Goldwater's line of argument, we could construct the following rationale for the campaign of 1964. To avoid being a permanent minority party, the Republican party must dislodge from the Democratic party a sizable bloc of votes. Roosevelt stole large numbers of workers and Negroes from the Republicans, while holding on to traditional Democratic voters. Who is there for the Republicans to steal? Obviously the target must be the disaffected, the white Southern vote. In an election year that holds next to no chance for a Republican victory, the entire campaign should be aimed at gaining the South, at whatever the cost. Once the South is in the Re-

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publican ranks, it will stay in, such is the prevailing mentality of that region. Four years later, a Republican moderate can reassemble the normal Republican vote while inheriting the South. In this way, and only in this way, will the Republicans stand a chance of winning in the coming generation.

We read Jaffa's essay and find no indication of such a line of reasoning. What we find instead is the assertion that the normal politics of America is one-party politics: for long periods of time, one party is dominant, and the opposition must content itself with offering more or less the same program as the majority party, without much hope of capturing power. The majority successfully controls the definition of issues—until some great moment in American political life is reached, some occasion which generates the possibility of making an *evangelical* appeal to the American people. In the elections of Jefferson, Jackson, Lincoln and Franklin Roosevelt, we have "... those apocalyptic elections in which the reigning coalition was cast down from its majority position and a new majority became the center of the political solar system." Can it be that Jaffa saw in Goldwater the leader of a new evangelism, or rather the new leader of the old evangelism? On the basis of Jaffa's essay, we would have to answer for him, and say No. He says, "The evangelical revival of the Revolutionary creed, however adapted to new circumstances, is the key to these great shifts in the structure of political power in the community." The revivification of *equality* is the stimulus to electoral transformation. "Every one of the great electoral revolutions has been, in the sense in which the French use the term, a revolution of the 'left'." What must the Republican politicians who heard Jaffa read these words have thought? (In a foreword to the book, dated December 1964, Charles Percy of Illinois praises Jaffa for his insight.) More important, what should we, familiar with Jaffa's work and impressed with the intelligent idealism behind it, and now apprised of his specific views on party, think of his attachment to Goldwater? What should we make of it?

A CHRISTIAN "MISHNA"

THE SETTING OF THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT. By W. D. DAVIES. *Cambridge University Press. 547 pp. $12.50.*

Reviewed by SEYMOUR SIEGEL

WHATEVER ELSE MIGHT be said about the relationship between Judaism and Christianity, one thing is certain—the latter grew out of the former. Thus, according to Paul's Letter to the Romans, the Jews are the natural branches of the tree of redemption, whose "root" is Israel's history; the Gentiles are "grafted in among them." As time went on, however, it became customary for students of Christian history to ignore the Jewish roots of the sayings of Jesus, the teachings of Paul and the apostles, and the institutions of the Church. If they considered the Judaism of Jesus's time at all, it was either to dismiss it as *Spaetjudentum* (late Judaism) —that is, as an irritating superfluity—or to use it as a foil for the celebration of Christian "advances" in ethics and religion. This annoying tendentiousness of Christian scholarship was partly a consequence of the fact that translations of 1st- and 2nd-century Jewish sources were relatively scarce, while the intricacies of a talmudic argument were difficult enough even for students who had grown up with Hebrew. But what was even more important, much of modern biblical scholarship had its roots in Germany, where the Lutheran heritage stressed the absolute dichotomy between Law (or Torah) and Gospel. In the Augustinian-Lutheran view, the religion of Jesus came in order to break the chains of the Law that had been forged by Judaism. How, then, could Christianity be anything other than a radical departure from its Jewish antecedent?

It has taken a long time for Christian scholars to overcome such prejudice, which even today survives in some quarters. However, most Christian schools of historical study and biblical exegesis now take it for granted that rabbinic Judaism provided the background, and in some cases the content, of Christian teachings and institutions. Among those most influential in creating this positive reassessment of rabbinic Judaism has been Professor W. D. Davies of Union Theological Seminary. The present volume, "part of a wider attempt to understand the interaction of Christianity and Judaism in the first century," represents a continuation of his earlier researches, especially his highly esteemed *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism.*

In point of scholarship and objectivity, Professor Davies's new book compares favorably with the best products of German *Religionswissenschaft* (science of religion). He has read the rabbinic texts in the original, and he has painstakingly studied all the secondary material bearing on the subject. Yet the results of his research are not limited in interest to the specialist alone; they have wide implications for the understanding of the general relationship between Judaism and Christianity.

Professor Davies sets out to examine the influences both within and outside the Church "which led to the concentrated presentation of moral teaching known as the Sermon on the Mount." Actually, the Sermon is one in name only. We do not know how much of it was actually spoken by Jesus, and how much resulted from contributions by transmitters of the

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tradition. (Modern scholarship attributes the relevant chapters in Matthew to three different sources—a post-65 C.E. Roman one; another dating about 50 C.E.; and a third one derived from the early Church in Jerusalem.) In any case, when Matthew composed his gospel he did not simply paste together the materials available to him. He not only refashioned and carefully rephrased them, he also added to them in accordance with his understanding of the mission of Jesus, and in response to the needs of the Church in his time—the end of the 1st century. In tracing the setting of the Sermon on the Mount, Professor Davies therefore focuses on the intellectual and ecclesiastical currents of thought that influenced Matthew as he composed it.

ACCORDING TO Professor Davies, two elements in rabbinic Judaism were particularly important in shaping the writings of Matthew: the *Halakhah,* or the Law, and the idea of Messianic fulfillment. Now, as Professor Davies demonstrates, the relationship between the Law, or Torah, and the Messiah was not completely explained by the Judaism of Matthew's time. Thus it was not clear what the Messiah would do with the Torah when he appeared; the only thing that was certain was that he would not abrogate it entirely. The Messiah might settle disputed points of interpretation of the Torah; he might prune away some unnecessary elements; he might modify some regulations. But the Torah would continue to be in force even in the Messianic era. Matthew, of course, believed that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah, and the Sermon on the Mount, Professor Davies says, embodies his belief that the Messianic era had not destroyed the *Halakhah,* but rather had created a new *Halakhah*—a Messianic Law. In the words of Professor Davies, "Not antithesis but completion expresses the relationship between the Law of Moses and the teaching of Jesus."

But the relationship between Judaism and early Christianity can also be seen in more concrete historical terms. Matthew wrote his gospel some time after 70 C.E.—when the second Temple was destroyed—and during the period when Rabbi Johanan ben Zakkai was rebuilding rabbinic Judaism in Jamnia. It was there that a revitalized Pharisaism produced the codification of the Law in the *Mishna,* and fixed the important elements of the liturgy. Professor Davies maintains that the Sermon on the Mount is a "Christian answer to Jamnia." He shows that the Lord's Prayer bears structural similarities to the Jewish *Shemoneh-Esre* and that the sayings of Jesus seem to be related to the form of expression in the *Pirke Avot,* the Ethics of the Fathers. Moreover, he refers to Dr. Louis Finkelstein's intriguing hypothesis that when Matthew counts fourteen generations from Abraham to David, fourteen generations from David to the Babylonian captivity, and fourteen generations from the captivity to the birth of Jesus, his procedure should be understood in the light of the beginning of the Ethics of the Fathers, where fourteen generations are counted from Moses to the schools of the Pharisees. It is no accident that the beginning of the Gospel of Matthew, the beginning of the *Pirke Avot* and the *Avot* of Rabbi Nathan all refer to fourteen generations, for this procedure, according to Rabbi Finkelstein, is a way of arguing about the locus of the authentic tradition. Whereas the Pharisees see their own school as the true heir of Moses, Matthew points to the Christian Church as the legitimate interpreter of the Scriptures. Though today we may think this a strange way to authenticate a claim to legitimacy, it appears that antiquity was impressed by it.

Since Matthew looked upon the teaching of Jesus as *Halakhah,* he was faced with the task of making its extravagant demands viable to the community. For example, Mark and Luke, both of whom precede Matthew, quote Jesus as saying: "Whosoever shall put away his wife and marry another commits adultery." Matthew, however, has Jesus say: "Whoever divorces his wife *except for unchastity* and marries commits adultery." The additional clause, in the opinion of Professor Davies, is a kind of *Gemara,* an interpretation of the original words. Such modifications were necessary because the final end of history, which earlier Christian writers had felt to be imminent, had not come about. The words of Jesus had therefore to be applied to real historical situations, and this is what Matthew intended to do when he constructed the Messianic Law.

EVERYONE, of course, has always agreed that the Sermon on the Mount was messianic, but it is Professor Davies's great achievement to have demonstrated that it was also meant to be understood as *Law.* The Sermon on the Mount is not an attack on legalism, but rather an example of what could be called a Christian *Mishna,* or even a *Shulchan Aruch.* The implications of this fact are crucial for the understanding of both Judaism and Christianity. Jewish legalism has repeatedly been ridiculed and denounced; Judaism's preoccupation with minutiae and its establishment of specific norms have frequently been contrasted with the freedom and humanism of Christianity. Now, however, it turns out that this legalism is the very paradigm followed by the originators of Christian teaching.

Jewish *Halakhah* represented an attempt to make the prophetic ethic relevant. As a real society faced with real problems, the Jews could not regulate conduct and establish norms merely by referring to general principles. Rather, they had to develop a patient and sometimes annoying "casuistry" so that these general maxims could be applied to specific situations. The same process is evident in the early history of Christianity. At first Jesus was regarded as the teacher who proclaimed the end of the world, and with it the end of realistic ethical norms; but when that end did not come, *Halakhah*—as embodied in the Sermon on the Mount—became necessary. (Professor Davies cites a fascinating parallel. In the beginning, revolutionary Communism was violently antinomian. Since the new classless society was to be without property relationships, the law and the state which had served the interests of private property would also vanish. "Communism," said a Soviet jurist in

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1927, "means not the victory of socialist law, but the victory of socialism over any law.")

No one can deny that there are crucial differences between Judaism and Christianity. In the 2nd century, Justin Martyr, arguing with the Jew Trypho, put it very clearly: "Those who have followed and will follow Christ are the true Israel, the children of the Promise, the true successors of those Jews who found justification in times past." On the theological level at least, the real issue between the two communities continues to be whether the Jews or the Christians are the true heirs to the Promise of the Covenant. But Professor Davies's remarkable book shows that whatever differences may stand between Judaism and Christianity, both agree as to the necessity of Law in religion.

THE NORTHERN LIGHT

O CANADA. AN AMERICAN'S NOTES ON CANADIAN CULTURE. By EDMUND WILSON. *Farrar, Straus & Giroux. 245 pp. $4.95.*

Reviewed by NEIL COMPTON

SOME YEARS AGO, according to the Canadian novelist Mordecai Richler, a group of New York editors compiled a list of imaginary books that would be sure to lose money for their publishers. At the top was *Canada, Our Good Neighbor to the North.*

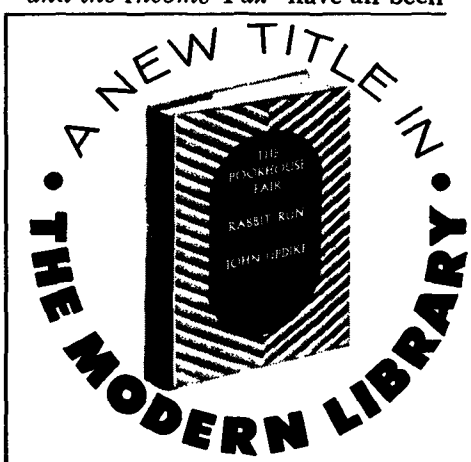
True or not, this is a typically Canadian anecdote, combining self-depreciation with a hint of resentment at the arrogant self-sufficiency of their good neighbor to the south. English-speaking Canadians have always had to live uneasily in the margin between British and American culture, and have grown used, if not reconciled, to being taken for granted on both sides of the Atlantic; French Canadians have created their own unique and indigenous way of life, but lived for two centuries in a state of such defensive introversion that even those English Canadians who lived among them were unable to share their culture. In consequence, though Canada's size, wealth, industrial development, and educational institutions entitle her to rank with the largest of middle powers, she has always ranked below, say, Hungary or Mexico in the international cultural pecking order.

Things are beginning to change, however. During the last three or four years there has been an astonishing burst of American interest in Canada (perhaps more noticeable if you live north rather than south of the border) and a great increase in the volume of publication on the subject. This is due in part to the violent activities of the Quebec separatist terrorists and the political and cultural crisis of which they are a symptom, but also perhaps to the attraction of the rather unassertive and indeterminate English Canadian character for those who find the complex fate of being an American rather a burden in these stirring times. There is, for instance, a considerable migration of U.S. academics (not scientists) to Canada, which cannot be entirely explained by the fact that salaries are now roughly the same in each country.

An early hint of this development came in 1960 when the most eminent living American critic took a great deal of space in America's most fashionable weekly to praise a Canadian writer as "the most unjustly neglected novelist in the English-speaking world" and to compare him "without absurdity" to Turgenev and Chekhov. Though it did not induce many Canadians to revise their estimate of Morley Callaghan, Edmund Wilson's article caused a sensation in literary circles not only because of the extravagance of its praise, but also because of the novelty of seeing any member of the British or American cultural establishment take a Canadian writer seriously. Soon the astonishing rumor went round that Wilson was "at work" on Canada and its culture, and in 1964 three long essays appeared in the *New Yorker.* These, together with the Callaghan article and a brief additional note, make up the present volume.

O Canada is the kind of work we have come to expect from Wilson these days—rambling and discursive, based upon wide but unsystematic reading (often of obscure or unfashionable writers), and liberally spiced with the author's Johnsonian wit and prejudice (Samuel, needless to say, not Lyndon). His catholic, cosmopolitan sensibility enables him to feel equally at home in the literatures of both English and French Canada (I know no other critic, Canadian or otherwise, who is); he reminds us that Parkman's *France and England in North America* is still the best introduction to the early history of this continent; he summarizes the plots of a number of Canadian novels so brilliantly that to read the originals is rather anticlimactic; and he writes with particular sympathy and insight about the constricted, frustrating, exciting situation of contemporary French Canada, to which he devotes more than half the book.

Wilson's method as journalist and critic is the reverse of academic or scientific. His judgments have always been intensely personal, not to say idiosyncratic, and he has never been afraid to praise (as in the case of Edna St. Vincent Millay's poetry) or to condemn (as in the case of Kafka's stories) when the pressure of received opinion would make lesser men keep quiet. However, he suffers from the defect of this admirable quality. His recent works—I am thinking particularly of *A Piece of My Mind, Patriotic Gore,* and *The Cold War and the Income Tax*—have all been



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written in a mood of revulsion from contemporary American life. The values they celebrate are those which, in Wilson's view, were casualties of the Great American Earthquake (his metaphor for the Crash and the Depression) and the war which followed. His obsession with this theme is evident even in *Apologies to the Iroquois* (whose grievances long antedate this century) and it is present in *O Canada*.

WILSON regards Canada as a kind of pastoral retreat from the homogenized, conformist, over-organized mid-century USA. His earliest memories of the country are of his father's annual hunting trips. He envies Canadians their frontier on the wilderness and speaks of the instinct of Americans to "renew their eroded self-confidence, their conviction of primitive strength, by betaking themselves" north of the border. He finds the heterogeneity and dissociation of Canada's diverse linguistic and ethnic groups rather a relief from the American melting pot (as a matter of fact, a recent satirical novel about Canada is aptly called *The Unmelting Pot*). So far, so good.

However, just as the real inhabitants of Arcadia would not have recognized themselves in the elegantly literate shepherds and shepherdesses of Theocritus and Vergil, Canadians do not recognize themselves in Wilson's idyll. Though he disarms criticism by confessing to an immense ignorance about many facets of Canadian life and claims to be offering us only random "notes," his concentration upon a very few representatives of the older literary establishment, such as E. J. Pratt and Hugh MacLennan, gives a quite false picture of the real state of Canadian culture today. My impression is that he has been a little more successful with French Canada, but this may be because I myself am less at home there than I ought to be. In both cases, he conveys a false impression of Canada as a haven of older "American" virtues by ignoring the crucial importance of non-literary media such as radio, television, and movies in contemporary Canadian life.

There are a great many minor errors of fact (many of the more outrageous attributed to anonymous informants: "I was told that. . . .") and a good deal of rather bald summarizing, particularly in the sections dealing with the Duplessis regime in Quebec. I shall content myself here with objecting to Wilson's use of the term "British" where the common usage is "English" Canada: since language is the only thing that unites all non-French speaking Canadians, the former adjective not only sounds odd; it is incorrect.

I do not wish to close on a negative note. If there is much that seems "wrong" in this book to a Canadian, it is after all offered as "an American's Notes on Canadian Culture." Besides, Wilson wrong still makes better reading than most critics right.

STAMPING OUT ADDICTION

THE ADDICT AND THE LAW. By ALFRED R. LINDESMITH. *Indiana University Press. 337 pp. $7.50.*

Reviewed by HOWARD S. BECKER

I SUPPOSE IT is an exaggeration to say that no sensible person opposes changing the way we presently deal with our narcotics problem for something akin to the British system, but it is not much of an exaggeration. Our system of prohibiting addicts legal access to drugs is brutal and unjust. It creates a vast illicit trade in narcotics that we cannot control, thus insuring a continuing recruitment of new addicts, who commit crimes to support their habits. It encourages police corruption, both in the form of bribery and graft and a cynical contempt for civil liberties and due process. Britain and other Western European countries, on the other hand, allow physicians to prescribe maintenance doses of opiates for incurable addicts and, as a direct consequence, have no illicit traffic, small numbers of addicts, and no "narcotics problem."

The argument is so well known, and has been repeated so often by social scientists, physicians, lawyers, and journalists, that only incurable moralists and the police and governmental bureaucracies that live by enforcing our present laws refuse to accept its obvious logic. Precisely because the argument is so well known, I approached Lindesmith's new book with a certain trepidation. Even though Lindesmith is one of the country's most distinguished experts on the subject, having spent thirty years in research on it, what could he say that had not been said before? Wouldn't the book be just a rehash of what we already know?

I need not have worried. Aside from arguments over policy, most scientific writing on narcotics (like most of the writing on any form of deviance) has focused on those accused of wrong-doing rather than on those making the accusation. We concern ourselves with the characteristics of addicts, how they got that way and how they behave now that they are that way. Even when we attribute their behavior to the operations of the law, we seldom ask how the law got that way or why law enforcers act as they do. In this book, Lindesmith raises precisely these questions and gives the first coherent account of how our narcotics control system actually works, of what police, prosecutors, and judges do to addicts, and of how the Federal Narcotics Bureau has achieved a monolithic control that the statute never gave it.

HIS BASIC premise is that the system a country uses to control narcotics shapes the kind of problem it has. Countries which allow addiction to be handled in private medical practice have practically no problem at all. Countries which prohibit the use of narcotics—such as the United States, Canada, and most of the Asiatic nations—have sizable problems of spreading addiction and addiction-related crimes. Countries which have changed from a permissive to a prohibitionist system, as Japan did under the influence of our military government, have experienced a startling growth of addiction and crime. Lindesmith's skillful synthesis of data from around the world nails this point down surely.

His major contribution is a masterful analysis of our system of control, of the problems police and prosecutors face in trying to get rid of the underground drug mar-

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ket. Assume that they are honest and sincerely wish to arrest and convict the major wholesalers; nothing less will do, because everyone recognizes that nothing is accomplished by arresting smalltime peddlers. How do you find out who the big boys are? How do you get evidence that will stand up in court? There is no victim to bring a complaint, as there is in most crimes, for addicts do not want to see their suppliers go to jail; and middlemen, the only ones who might know those on top, do not wish to endanger their business arrangements. Even if someone is pushed by pique to inform, the fear of retaliation inhibits him. The police solve their problem in several ways, but the chief way is to arrest the easily caught user on some pretext and force him to act as a stool pigeon, cutting off his supply of drugs if he refuses, and furnishing him with drugs confiscated from others if he cooperates. These procedures seldom net a big wholesaler. But the stool pigeon will turn in other addicts and small time peddlers, creating an arrest record which can be pointed to as evidence that something is being done. Since addicts are poor, they are seldom represented by counsel and, even though the evidence was gathered illegally and the arrest was unconstitutional, they are more often convicted than not.

Not surprisingly, such a system has no effect on the amount of addiction or on the amount of crime committed by addicts. Enforcement officials blame the lack of results on overly lenient judges and press successfully for stricter laws, stiffer penalties, and mandatory sentences which will limit judicial discretion in sentencing. The latest revision in the federal law (1956) provided, for instance, mandatory five- to twenty-year sentences, with no possibility of probation or parole, for a first selling offense, and a possibility of the death penalty for selling heroin to a minor. State laws have been similarly hardened. Lindesmith shows that such changes have almost no effect, because juries will not convict when the punishment is so grossly out of line with the offense and because prosecutors will not bring cases to trial that are so likely to be lost. In fact, the chief consequence is that prosecutors find it difficult to bargain with addicts for a guilty plea (because judges seldom give more than the minimum sentence) and end up charging them with lesser offenses, such as disorderly conduct, to regain the flexibility they need to continue to operate as they always have.

WHY, GIVEN SUCH a patently inefficient and illogical system of control, have we not made the obviously needed and often recommended changes that Lindesmith and others have argued for so convincingly? The book gives, fully documented, the expected answer: the Federal Bureau of Narcotics and its recently retired Commissioner, Mr. Harry J. Anslinger. The Bureau has always had the notion, as one of its officials told Lindesmith in explaining why an agent had threatened him with unspecified trouble if he did not stop espousing the British system, that it has among its other functions that of "disseminating right information and preventing the dissemination of wrong information." The Bureau has performed that function with zeal. It circulates vitriolic attacks on critics of its policies. It publishes meaningless and misleading statistics designed to buttress arguments for the status quo. It produces misinterpretations, *à la 1984*, of such matters of fact as the character of drug control in Britain and of such matters of historical record as the reason for the "failure" of the narcotics clinics established in the early 1920's. (The Bureau claims they were inherently unworkable, but the record shows that several successful clinics were closed down because of relentless Bureau pressure.) It has harassed publishers of anti-Bureau books and prevented a Canadian film on addiction from being shown in this country. It has, perhaps most important of all, frightened the medical profession into abdicating its clear responsibility to insist on the right to treat addiction in ways that medical research and experience prove sound rather than in ways dictated by a policeman's prejudice. All in all, it is a disgraceful story of an ex-

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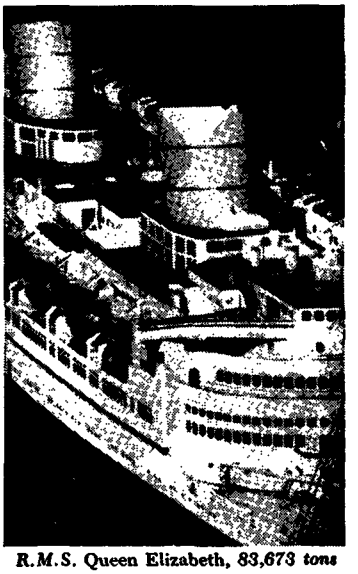

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ecutive agency run wild, making policy without regard for the intent of the statute that authorized its existence or for judicial and constitutional restrictions on its actions, harassing and shouting its opponents down and trying to prevent any meaningful public discussion of what it has wrought.

Lindesmith ends his book with a sober plea for reform, a plea that carries great weight because of the detailed description and indictment of current practice that precedes it. He advocates a simple plan: let physicians treat addicts privately, just as they treat other patients. This would require no change in the law, for it is not the law itself but Bureau regulations issued under the law that have created the current mess. It would save a great deal of money now spent on law enforcement and compulsory treatment facilities. It would free physicians and scientists from police restraints so that they can do without fear of arrest the research and experimentation that may produce better methods of treatment. It would destroy the underground traffic in drugs and relieve addicts of the necessity to commit crimes in order to maintain their habits. And it would undo a great injustice, increasing respect for the law at a time when that respect is sorely needed. Lindesmith's lucid account of why our system is as bad as it is may hasten the reform that has been so long coming.

THE SPANISH TRAGEDY

THE SPANISH REPUBLIC AND THE CIVIL WAR, 1931-1939. By GABRIEL JACKSON. *Princeton University Press. 578 pp. $12.50.*

A POET'S WAR: BRITISH POETS AND THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR. By HUGH D. FORD. *University of Pennsylvania Press. 327 pp. $7.50.*

Reviewed by ALLEN GUTTMANN

HISTORICAL CONVENTION has it now that World War II began when Hitler's *Wehrmacht* moved across the Polish border. A more accurate date would be July 17, 1936, when the garrisons of Ceuta, Melilla, and Tetuán rose in rebellion against the Spanish government, or July 19, when a majority of the people (and a large minority of the military) proved by armed resistance their loyalty to the Republic.

Once it was obvious that the *pronunciamiento* had failed, the insurgent generals were forced to call upon Hitler, Mussolini, and Salazar. They received ample aid. The Republic was less lucky. Léon Blum, Socialist premier of France, went to London and was told that aid to the Republic, which Blum had already begun to provide, had to stop if the French expected British support in opposition to Hitler and Mussolini. Blum acquiesced. The Non-Intervention Committee, dominated by Great Britain, deplored Soviet violations of the Non-Intervention Agreement but could not credit reports of Italian intervention—which Italian newspapers proclaimed in headlines. Lord Plymouth, always a gentleman, refused to pay attention to Mussolini's boasts of a new era of Roman conquest.

Neville Chamberlain's dismal visit to Munich has become a comfortable symbol of appeasement. Comfortable because the first betrayal was in Spain. Anthony Eden resigned from Chamberlain's cabinet, seven months before Munich, in protest against Mussolini's Iberian adventures. But the Conservative party has forgotten its early enthusiasm for Franco's *Movimiento Nacional,* and Americans remember Munich rather than the embargo we imposed contrary to treaty commitments and, in the long run, contrary to our own national interest. To remember the Spain of 1936-1939 would be to raise troublesome questions about Spain today, and tomorrow.

BUT NOT EVERYONE has forgotten. For millions who came politically of age in the 1930's, the Spanish Civil War was a personal tragedy and a wound from which recovery will never be complete. It is hyperbole to say, as Gabriel Jackson does, that "an entire generation of Englishmen and Americans felt a deeper emotional involvement in that war than in any other world event of their lifetimes. . . ." It is no exaggeration to say that Jackson's book, written with a fine and forceful combination of personal involvement and professional detachment, is what Hugh Thomas's overrated history was taken to be: the first comprehensive and trustworthy account in English. The book is much more than a chronicle. It is also an interpretation of the Republic's place in Spanish history, an interpretation comparable in its excellence to Georges LeFebvre's celebrated study of the French Revolution. We are not likely for a long time to have a book that better deserves the cheapened adjective *definitive.*

The Republic established in April of 1931, when municipal elections convinced Alfonso XIII that he had lost the trust of the people, was essentially Liberal (in the classic sense) with strong support from the right-wing Socialists under Julian Besteiro and Indalecio Prieto. The dominant personality was Manual Azaña, moderate leader of *Acción Republicana.* Azaña's government made major reforms in the military, greatly improved primary education, and struggled with chronic economic problems intensified by the worldwide Depression. Except for the slowness of progress in land reform, the inexperienced government succeeded remarkably well. Had the problems of Spain been economic, the Republic might have survived.

But Spanish Liberalism, like French and unlike Anglo-American Liberalism, faced a powerful and intransigent Church. "Whenever the governments of the Constitutional Monarchy had reduced the Church's monopoly," writes Jackson, "the hierarchy cried persecution." The hierarchy cried persecution when confronted with the Republic's Constitution, but now the hierarchy had justification for its fears. The Church, long endangered from below by the Anarchists for whom it represented perennial oppression, was now the victim of an official policy of legislative anticlericalism that alienated President Niceto Alcalá-Zamora, Gregorio Marañon, Miguel Maura, and other Catholic supporters of the bourgeois Republic.

The Catholic response was a coalition of Center-Right parties

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that won the election of November 1933 over the opposition of a badly divided Left. (The Anarchists, disillusioned by a Republic of compromises and gradualism, abstained from the election.) When the Center-Right coalition opted for reaction rather than reform, the revolutionary Left attempted to seize power in a rebellion disingenuously referred to, in later polemics, as a general strike. The rebellion fizzled everywhere except in the Asturias, where Socialist and Anarchist miners fought bravely and gallantly, and were overwhelmed and massacred by forces rushed in from Morocco. The government had then a chance to act as magnanimously as Azaña's government had acted when General Sanjurjo sought, in 1932, to overthrow the Republic. The government chose misrepresentation and bloody repression.

Opinion shifted again, and cooperation among the parties of the Left led to the electoral triumph of the *Frente Popular* in February 1936. Both ends of the political spectrum now turned on the Republic. Jackson's account has a tone of almost Thucydidean sadness: "While the Marañons and Mauras, Besteiros and Prietos, talked of ending useless strikes, stopping attacks on churches, restoring public order, the *exaltados* of both the Right and the Left rolled up their sleeves. When the feeble parliamentary bourgeois government had been discredited, the future would be theirs."

And so it was. The generals revolted and the Republic perished between the Monarchists and Falangists for whom it was too radical and the left-wing Socialists and Anarchists for whom it was not radical enough. The miracle is not that the insurgent minority was able to win but that a divided government and a handful of loyal officers were able to put together an army and, with some aid from Russia, resist for three years the Foreign Legion, the Moorish regulars, the *Luftwaffe*, the *Corpo Truppe Volontarie*, the hierarchy of the Church, and a substantial segment of the Spanish people.

Jackson's account of the war itself is a model of historical narration. He does not handle military history quite as well as Hugh Thomas, who taught at Sandhurst, but he is clear and sufficiently detailed enough for all but the specialist. No other book, except perhaps *La Révolution et la guerre d'Espagne*, by Pierre Broué and Emile Témime, analyzes the political complexities of the two Spains with a clarity and acuteness equal to Jackson's.

The Republic moved from a Liberal-Socialist coalition led by José Giral to a left-wing Socialist government under Francisco Largo Caballero. When Largo Caballero, "the Spanish Lenin," refused to sacrifice the social revolution to the war, the moderates, with the strong support of the newly influential Communists, forced him out and replaced him with Juan Negrín, an eminently decent and even noble man who preached resistance and restraint. Negrín and Azaña (who had become president in 1936) placed their hope in an intervention by the democracies. The hope was vain. When the war seemed lost, in the bitter winter of 1938-39, Colonel Segismundo Casado formed a *junta*, seized the government of the Republic long enough to seek honorable terms for surrender, and, when honorable terms were refused, gave up the struggle and relied on the mercy of a *conquistador* who turned out to be all but merciless. From 1939 through 1943, 200,000 men died in Spanish prisons (Jackson's estimate)—twice the number who fell on the battlefield.

The true test of Jackson's skill is his treatment of the Nationalists. He shows them to be a gaggle of factions, from traditional monarchists to outright Fascists, unified by General Franco's genius into a ruthless political machine responsive to Franco's direction and to no one else's. Where the Nationalists were humane, Jackson praises them; where they were not, he documents the full extent of their brutality.

Except for the inadequacy of the pinch-penny bibliography, the book is hard to fault. Errors of fact are almost exclusively typographical (e.g. *Quadrogesimo Anno* for *Quadragesimo Anno*). Jackson has tried, perhaps too hard, to reverse the emphases of most historians

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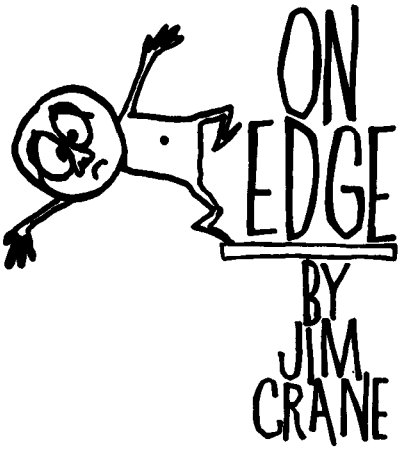

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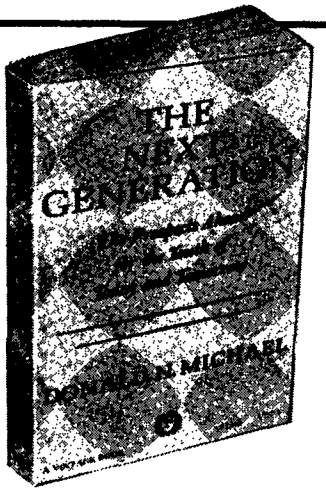

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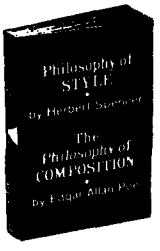

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and to "expound the history of the Second Republic and the Civil War primarily as seen from within Spain." Jackson sketches the European scene, and makes a few feeble gestures in the direction of Washington, but his focus remains always on Spain. He does not attempt to show how and why the Spanish war became, for the generation of the 30's, the last great lost cause.

SMALL MATTER. Others, of whom Hugh D. Ford is the most recent, have written of the international aspect. *Poets' War* is a specialized monograph devoted to the responses of one small but important group. Despite a good deal of unnecessary historical background, Ford succeeds very well in his effort to account for every poet and for every poem. He deals not only with the major writers of Auden's Oxford circle but also with minor figures, with the work of lesser poets who actually fought (and often died) in Spain, and even with Roy Campbell's mean-minded pro-Franco doggerel. Although Ford's book is organized as the literary history of a political event, he tries, unfortunately, to evaluate the poetry as though literary excellence were his main interest. The result is a sloppy mix of extremely useful information and extremely dull criticism. Where the poems are good, they are simple and need no explication. Where they are bad, Ford pontificates: "No doubt the strict confines of the sonnet form proved too limited for the fuller development which this theme needed. Such compression is technically pretentious and hardly constructive to ready comprehension." Much as we want to know what the war meant to the men who are traditionally supposed to speak for all of us (or, at least, for the best of us), we don't need this kind of talk.

It is a pity, therefore, that Gabriel Jackson did not, as Hugh Thomas did, make Spanish and foreign literature a part of his subject. Perhaps it is from a sense of what he has omitted that Jackson, ordinarily quite sober and even prosaic, struggles toward poetry in his conclusion:

> It is a terrible, and repeated, human dilemma that at times men have no choice between submission to tyranny and a war which will in all likelihood destroy many of the institutions they set out to defend. In July 1936 the Spanish people faced the alternatives of submission or resistance. They chose to resist, and like Spaniards over the past two thousand years, they fought magnificently. . . . The majority fought to preserve Spain, and Europe, from tyranny. They were conquered, but they were not humiliated in their souls. The moral grandeur of a generous Republic and a titanic struggle for liberty will serve their spirit well in the future.

Writing these sentences, Jackson must have known that he has himself well served that generous Republic.

BOOK REVIEWERS IN THIS ISSUE

GEORGE KATEB *is the author of* Utopia and Its Enemies.

SEYMOUR SIEGEL, *a new contributor, is a professor of theology at Jewish Theological Seminary.*

NEIL COMPTON *contributed "Television and Canadian Culture" to our November 1964 issue.*

HOWARD S. BECKER, *another new contributor, is a well-known sociologist who specializes in the study of deviant groups.*

ALLEN GUTTMANN, *who is also making his first appearance in* COMMENTARY, *is the author of* The Wound in the Heart: America and the Spanish Civil War.

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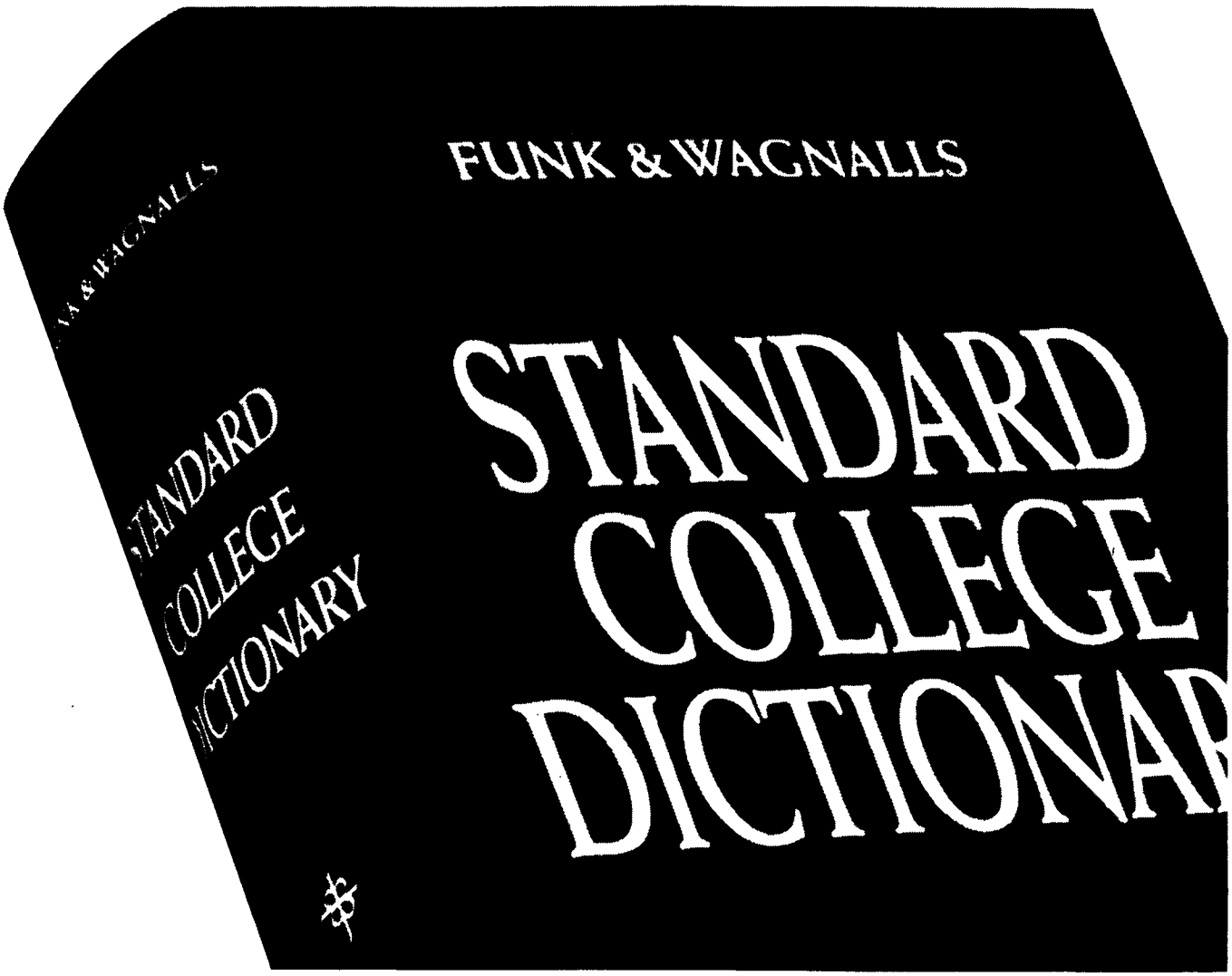

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